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THE
TRUE SONSHIP
OF
CHRIST
INVESTIGATED
AND
HIS PERSON, DIGNITY AND OFFICES
EXPLAINED AND CONFIRMED
FROM THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

And the Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us,
and we beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the only
Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth.
John i. 14.

Αληθεια διηγήσεται τον Λογον, οτι εν σα διαπαντος ενδιήσεν εν καρδια
Θεου. Τον τον Λογον εγεννησεν προ του χρονου καταδιδεν πασης υλισιας.
Theoph. Antioch. ad Autolych.

BY A CLERGYMAN. *K.*

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M DCC LXX VI.



P R E F A C E.

THE Author of the following Treatise ever hath been of opinion, that as divine Revelation is the only and the perfect rule of revealed religion, so, by the general voice of Revelation, every capital article of our religion is declared; and that, therefore, to establish these articles, we must consult the Scriptures at large, and be satisfied that we have their universal and harmonious testimony in proof of them. Upon these indubitable principles, he has been at pains to examine the chief articles of religion; which have been generally received in the Christian and protestant churches, and is happy to find they are so well supported. One article, however, he greatly apprehends, has not been examined and determined by this unerring standard, even the Generation and Sonship of our Blessed Saviour. As this is an article of capital importance, and has been long a subject of controversy in the Christian church, the Author resolved to inquire into it with the greater attention. The appellation, Son of God, he easily perceived

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perceived must be a personal character ; and so must be applied to Christ, in one of these three respects, viz. as he is God, the second person of the Godhead, begotten by the first from all eternity ; or as he is Man, created by the divine power, or lastly, as he is God-man, generated by the union of both these natures in one complex person. This is evidently an article of revealed religion : and as the fairest way to determine it, he resolved to consult every passage in the Old and New Testaments, in which our Blessed Saviour is held forth as the Son of God, and examine to which of these explications they would most naturally apply.

He has done so ; and after a careful collection and candid examination of the many texts of Scripture, which represent our Saviour as the Son of God, he could not find any general or convincing evidence, that this character belongs to him, either as he is God only, or as he is man only ; but that the general, unanimous, and consistent voice of revelation, declares him to be Son of God, as he is God-man, begotten of the Father, by the union of the Divine Word with human nature in his incarnation. This capital point fixed, he proceeded to consider the accounts given in

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in Scripture of the generation of the Son of God; the personal excellence and dignity he possesses, the offices he bears, and the honours he enjoys, and to examine whether they also would best apply to this notion of his Sonship, which he found they do.

These enquiries gave rise to the following Discourses. The Author has delivered the greatest part of them to a numerous congregation, who were universally satisfied that the explication given of this matter, is the Scriptural and just one. He has submitted them to some of the most judicious and learned of his brethren, who have all acknowledged the evidence of their truth; and urged the publication of them, as what might be of real service to the interests of Christianity. Whether the evidence he has produced in proof of his explication of our Saviour's Sonship is decisive, the impartial world will judge. The Author shall only say, that the explication of it here given stands clear of those difficulties with which all others are attended, and is supported by much stronger evidence, than any other that hath yet been proposed. He knows of no bad consequence it can have, and hopes may have good ones. Reconciling our Saviour's

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our's proper Sonship, with his supreme Deity, it will be no unseasonable antidote to those Arian and Socinian errors which continue to pester the Christian Church, and which have all along sprung, in a great degree, from mistaken notions of our Saviour's Sonship. Containing an explication of the chief article of revealed religion, it will be a general key to the Bible, by which many parts of it will be better understood. And as it not only establishes the proper Sonship of Christ, but delineates the dignity of his person as Son of God, unfolds the important offices for which he assumed that character, and points out the duties we must perform to him, if we would have the benefit of these offices, it contains an abridgement of the Christian scheme, and shews its expediency for the honour of God, and the happiness of his creatures, and the necessity of our compliance with it, if we would obtain that salvation for which it is appointed.

T H E

THE
TRUE SONSHIP
OF
CHRIST
INVESTIGATED, &c.

NO article of the Christian Faith is of greater importance than the Sonship of Christ. Upon this depend the whole mediatorial character, dignity and offices of our Blessed Redeemer, the salvation by him that as Christians we expect, and the duty that as Christians we owe to him. But no article perhaps of our holy religion has been more the subject of controversy in every age of the Christian Church. That Jesus is the Son of God, is so clearly declared in every part of the word of God, that all Christians have acknowledged it. But in what sense he is the Son of God, and is affirmed in Scripture to be so, has long been matter of much unhappy contention and debate. As Christ in his complex person possesses two natures, the divine and the human, some have held him to be the Son of God from the generation of his divine person by the Father from all eternity, and some from the supernatural formation of his human nature in the fulness of time. Others thinking the first opinion too high to consist with real divinity, and the second too low to support these distinguishing characters,

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God's begotten and his only begotten Son, have held him to be the Son of God from his office of mediator, or the honours God has bestowed on him in raising him from the dead, and exalting him to be heir and Lord of all. The dispute, though long agitated, is not over; which shows that the point is not yet placed in a light and established by evidence which produce general conviction. It has revived of late in the Protestant Churches, and begins to be canvassed with a degree of free enquiry less known in former ages. The belief of it required by God in order to our salvation, makes it presumable that he hath revealed it with sufficient clearness; if we carefully and impartially attend to his revelations. Our Saviour's character and offices intimately connected with his Sonship, the hopes we entertain from him, and the just honours we ought to pay to him, give this article an importance that entitles it to the most serious attention of every Christian; and which ought to excite every friend to Christianity and to mankind, if possible, to establish this truth upon its true and scriptural foundation, and to confirm it by evidence which every candid and judicious person must acknowledge to be decisive.

But this, though a capital part, is not the whole of our design. The proper explication of the Sonship of Christ will include a delineation of his general person, his natures, and offices. These are all related parts of this great subject, and the elucidation of them is necessary to unfold fully his character as the Son of God our Saviour, and to show how he is thereby qualified for the offices he executes: and the whole will be proper to justify the wisdom of God in this wonderful constitution, and to give us those just sentiments of
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this glorious person in his whole character, that will at once direct the sacred regards, that as Christians we owe to our divine Saviour and Lord, and support the high hopes we justly repose in him. With this view I shall endeavour to pursue the following plan, which bids fairest for a just decision and explication of this important subject. I shall

I. Prove that in the complex person of Christ there are two distinct natures, the divine and human, united and co-existing in one person,

II. Show that this person is in Scripture called the Son of God, his begotten, his only begotten Son, fix the proper notion of generation, and represent the improper and unscriptural senses in which this character has been ascribed to him.

III. Establish the Sonship of our Blessed Saviour, on what seems plainly to be its proper and scriptural foundation.

IV. Explain more particularly his generation, and the wonderful constitution of his person.

V. Represent the dignity, excellence and glory of his person and character.

VI. Treat of the great offices for which he was intended by his Father, with his effectual performance of them.

VII. Unfold the high honours and rewards to which he is exalted, with his just claim to them. And

VIII. Conclude all by pointing out, and recommending the great duties which we owe to him in his whole glorious character.

C H A P. I.

That in the complex Person of Christ there are two Natures, the Divine and Human, or the Second Person of the Trinity, and a human Soul and Body, all co-existing in one Person.

THE person of Christ is the foundation of all the characters which in Scripture are ascribed to him; and a proper knowledge of his person must be the best method of ascertaining in what sense the characters attributed to him in Scripture must be understood. Before we proceed then to determine his Sonship, unfold his dignity, or represent his offices; let us take a view of his person in general, and of the natures contained in it. Now, if we consult the record that God hath given us of his Son, we shall find that there are two distinct natures affirmed of him in Scripture, the nature of God and the nature of man. In other words, the complex person of Christ is composed of the second person of the Godhead, a glorious created spirit called his soul, and a real human body, all united and co-existing in one general person. These things we shall evince in order.

I. The first and the highest nature which the Scriptures ascribe to our Blessed Saviour is the Divine; and this we shall find affirmed of him with an evidence clear and convincing, as the truth to be established is great and important. That there is one God, or divine, infinite, all-perfect

perfect essence, is the first principle of all true religion, and the joint dictate of reason and revelation. But revelation farther assures us of what unassisted reason could not have discovered, *viz.* that in the unity of this Divine Essence, there co-exist three distinct personal subsistences, so distinguished from each other as to entitle them to distinct personal names, characters and offices, yet not so different but that their nature is numerically the same, they being distinct persons, subsisting in one common undivided essence. "For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one," 1 *John*, v. 7. This is the fundamental article of revealed religion, the foundation of the whole christian scheme, and therefore revealed with incontestable evidence. By the same authority by which the Scripture affirms the unity of the Divine Essence, it affirms that essence to be distinguished into three personal subsistences. By all the same arguments by which it proves to us the existence and divinity of one Supreme Being, it proves the divinity of all these persons which it affirms to be in the Godhead. And by whatever arguments it proves the divinity of any other person in the Godhead, by the same does it evince the divinity of Christ. The Supreme God, or any person in the Godhead, the Scripture demonstrates by calling him God, or giving him the names expressive of true and Supreme Deity; by attributing to him perfections that are essential to, and characteristic of the true God; by ascribing works to him which the true God alone can effect, and religious worship which the true God alone can receive. And by all those topics of proof does it evince the divinity of the Son our Saviour.

1. Christ is expressly called God, and the names expressive of the true God are in Scripture ascribed to him. Thus God the Father, though he will not give his glory to another, nor ascribe divinity to any but who is really divine, affirms the deity of his coessential Son. "To the Son he saith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," *Psalms* xlv. 6. *Heb.* i. 8. Isaiah calls him Immanuel, "God with us," *Isaiah* vii. 14. and the "mighty God," chap. ix. 6. and ascribes to him the proper and distinguishing name of the true God, even Jehovah, chap. vi. 1. which glorious person an inspired Evangelist assures us was Christ, *John* xii. 41. Jeremiah attributes to him the same incommunicable character in terms the most direct and explicit. Speaking of the Messiah, he says "this, is the name whereby he shall be called *," Jehovah our righteousness," *Jer.* xxiii. 6. John, when purposely establishing our Saviour's divinity against those first heretics, who had the impiety to deny it, assures us, "That in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," *John* vi. 1. And affirms of him in another place, "this is the true God, and eternal life," *John* v. 20. Thomas, on the fullest evidence that he was God as well as man, calls him "My Lord and my God," *John* xx. 28. And Paul in all the fullness and strength of language affirms him to be the "great God and our Saviour," *Tit.* ii. 13. and that he is "over all, God blessed for ever," *Rom.* ix. 5.

2. That Christ is true and supremely God is no less evident from all those perfections essential to, and inseparable from, the Deity that are attributed to Christ. Is eternity an essential and distinguishing perfection of the true God? It is ascribed

ascribed to Christ. So *Isaiah* calls him the everlasting Father, *Isaiah* ix. 6. Christ affirms of himself, "Before Abraham was, I am"; expressing his immutable eternal existence, *John* viii. 58. And calls himself Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, *Rev.* i. 8. Are immensity and omnipresence essential to God? They are ascribed to Christ. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, says our Blessed Lord, there am I in the midst of them," *Matt.* xviii. 20. When he gave commission to his disciples to go into all the world and preach his gospel to every creature, and when his human nature was about to ascend to the highest heaven, yet from the infinitude of his divinity he declares, "Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," *Matt.* xxviii. 20. Is omniscience a characteristical perfection of the Deity? It is affirmed of Christ, "Lord thou knowest all things," says Peter, thou knowest that I love thee," *John* xxi. 17. And this distinguishing character which the true God claims as his incommunicable prerogative, *Jer.* xvii. 10. Christ appropriates to himself, "I am he that searcheth the reins and hearts," *Rev.* ii. 23. Is omnipotence a distinctive attribute of the Deity? It is affirmed of Christ; *Isaiah* calls him the mighty God, *Is.* ix. 6. I am Alpha and Omega, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty, *Rev.* i. 8. Accordingly Paul assures us, that Christ hath power to subdue all things to himself, *Phil.* iii. 21. Or is immutability of nature and existence an essential and distinguishing character of the true God? It in like manner is ascribed to our Blessed Saviour. The heavens and the earth shall perish, but Christ endures; they shall wax old as a garment.

garment and be changed, but Christ is the same, his years have no end, *Pf. cii. 26. 27. Heb. i. 11, 12.* And of this divine personage the Apostle affirms, that he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, *Heb. xiii. 8.*

3. As a farther evidence of his divinity, works are ascribed to Christ which God all-perfect alone can perform. By Christ was that stupendous effect of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, even the creation of this vast Universe effected, which all reason and all Scripture determine to be the prerogative of God alone, *Pf. xix. 1. Rom. i. 20.* Of old hast thou laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands, says the psalmist of the true God, *Pf. cii. 25.* And the apostle interprets them of Christ Jesus, *Heb. i. 10.* All things, says John, were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made, *John i. 3.* By him, says Paul, were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers, all things were created by him, and for him, *Col. i. 16.* By Christ is the whole universe preserved. For "by him all things consist," *Col. i. 17.* "He upholdeth all things by the word of his power," *Heb. i. 3.* By Christ, and at his very will and command, were miracles wrought on universal nature; which none but the omnipotent God could perform. The raging winds and waves were stilled at his command. Water was changed into wine at his will, and the barren fig-tree withered at his frown. A few loaves and fishes were increased by a creative power to feed several thousands of hungry people, and in place of their being consumed, the remainder much exceeded the original stock. Diseases of all kinds

kinds were instantly healed by him, without any other prescription, but his saying the word and the cure was effected. The deaf were made to hear, the dumb to speak, and the born blind to see. Devils, when he ordered, were cast out of those possessed by them; and the dead at his command were raised again into life. Christ has power to forgive sins, which, as they are committed against God, reason and revelation join in assuring us, none but God can forgive, *Mark ii. 7, 10.* By the Son, as mighty God, are the dead at last to be raised; "for the hour cometh," says he, in which the dead shall hear the voice of "the Son of God, and they that hear shall live," *John v. 25.* By the Son is the world to be solemnly judged; for the Father judgeth no man but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, *John v. 22.* which as it requires infinite knowledge and rectitude to pass just sentence on every individual of the millions of men and fallen angels that shall be judged, and infinite power to put his sentences in execution, a God possessing these perfections, alone can perform. In fine, the renovation, as well as the creation of the world, is to be effected by Christ. For St. John in his prediction of that great event, tells us, that he that sits on the throne is to make all things new, *Rev. xxi. 5.*

4. As an additional argument of our Saviour's Divinity, it is to be observed, that the same religious worship which is due to the true God alone, the All-perfect Being, the Creator, Preserver and Lord of the universe, is by divine appointment to be paid to the Son. And no wonder when He and his Father, as to their divine essence, are one; and all these characters of true Deity, that make them the object of religious adoration, belong alike to both. Thus says

God by the Psalmist, "Kiss ye the Son, lest he
 " be angry, and ye perish from the way; blessed
 " are all they that put their trust in him." *Psal.*
 ii. 12. "Ye believe in God, says our Saviour,
 " believe also in me." *John* xiv. 1. And in ge-
 neral he assures us, that it is the will of God that
 " all men honour the Son, even as they honour
 " the Father." *John* v. 23. Paul both affirms,
 that religious worship is to be paid to the Son,
 and intimates his right to it, both as he is a
 divine person, and as God-Man Mediator; "who,
 " being in the form of God, thought it not rob-
 " bery to be equal with God, but made himself of
 " no reputation, and took upon him the form of a
 " servant, and was made in the likeness of sinful
 " men; and being found in fashion as a man, he
 " humbled himself and became obedient unto death,
 " even the death of the cross; wherefore God
 " also hath highly exalted him and given him a
 " name, which is above every name; that at the
 " name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of
 " things in heaven, and things in earth, and
 " things under the earth; and that every tongue
 " should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the
 " glory of God the Father." *Phil.* ii. 6—11. In
 Christ's name therefore, as well as in the name
 of the Father and of the Holy Spirit, is baptism,
 that solemn act of our religion, ordained to be
 performed, *Matt.* xxviii. 19. From him as well
 as from the Father does *Paul* pray for grace and
 peace, *1 Cor.* i. 3. *Eph.* i. 3. To him, by direc-
 tion of heaven, his first martyr, Stephen, addresses
 his dying prayer, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit,"
Acts vii. 59. Before his incarnation, *Isaiah* as-
 sures us, that the seraphim ascribe to him the
 same religious adoration as they do to the other
 divine Persons, *Isai.* vi. 3. compared with *John*
 xii.

xii. 41. And John testifies, that the whole celestial inhabitants, angelic and human, continue to pay the same high devotion to the Son, as to his Father; saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory and blessing.—Blessing and honour, and glory and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever."

Rev. v. 11—13.

Thus every act of religious worship is to be performed to Christ, and with the utmost propriety: for since he is affirmed to be God, since every perfection of God is ascribed to him, since he hath exerted these perfections in every work of creation, providence, and redemption, as the other Persons have done, he must be conjunct with them in divinity, and so conjunct with them in every religious act to which divinity is intitled.

5. To all these evidences of our Saviour's divinity we may add, that he is called in Scripture, the begotten and proper Son of God, affirmed to be one with his divine Father, and ranked in the same class with the other divine Persons in the coessential Trinity. A Son, a begotten and proper Son, as we shall shew our Saviour is declared to be, must ever possess the same nature with his Father who begat him; for whatever generates, generates its like. The original and originating principle of the Son, being communicated from the Father, must be essentially the same with him; and whatever additional substance it receives in consequence of its generation, still that originating principle is the chief constituent of the Son, and characterizes him to be of the same nature with his Father. But if this holds in human generation, where the originating principle is se-

parated from the Father, and a Son is produced of the same specific nature; infinitely more must it hold in the generation of the Son of God. For, though the accession of an additional nature, which is necessary to a proper generation, is made to him; yet the chief constituent of his complex Person, and which constitutes that Person the Son of God, is the second personal subsistence in the Godhead, which is inseparable from the Father, however distinguished from him; and so makes them as to divine essence numerically one. Accordingly our Saviour declares expressly, "I and my Father are one," *John* x. 30. "I am in the Father, and the Father in me," *John* xiv. 11. And therefore affirms, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father," ver. 9.

But Christ is not only proved to be God, by being declared the Son of God and one with God, or a distinct Person in the same divine essence; as a consequence of this, and a farther evidence of his divinity, he is uniformly classed with the other coessential Persons in the Trinity, whenever that sacred Triad is fully mentioned in Scripture. Thus Christ, when he institutes baptism, ordains it to be administered "in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," *Matt.* xxviii. 19. When Paul represents the order and œconomy of the divine Persons in the scheme of our salvation, he ranks Christ with the other two. "For through him, says he, we have access by one Spirit unto the Father," *Eph.* ii. 18. In like manner, when he prays to them in behalf of the Corinthians, he prays, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost," to be with them, *2 Cor.* xiii. 14.

And

And John tells us, that the three divine witnesses in heaven who bear record to the truth of the gospel, are "the Father, the Word, and "the Holy Ghost, and that these three are one,"

1 *John* v. 7.

Such is the manifold and convincing evidence we have that Christ Jesus is a divine Person. As this is a truth of the utmost importance, it was proper it should be certified by the highest evidence: and what higher evidence can be desired than is here given? Every passage of Scripture we have quoted furnishes an argument for our Saviour's divinity. Every class under which these arguments are reduced, afford a complex proof of it. All these topics of argument strengthen each other; and, the whole taken together, furnish a connected evidence which to every one who acknowledges the Scriptures to be the Word of God, must be absolutely decisive. For whatever evidence the Scriptures give us that there is a God, or that any Person of the Godhead is divine, the same evidence it gives us that Christ is God, or one of the divine Persons that exist in the Godhead.

But as we have the highest evidence revelation can give us, that Christ is truly God; so we have the same evidence that he is equal in divinity with the Father and the Spirit. The divine Essence is one; it is infinite, and indivisible. In it there exist three personal subsistences. These subsistences are personal, and they are distinct; yet they are not such distinct Persons, as to have different natures, such as we have; but such real and personal distinctions as can subsist in one and the same undivided essence. These personal distinctions are essential to the Deity, and are of the same necessary existence, the same eternity, the

the same supreme Deity, with the divine Essence they exist in ; possessing all the same essence, they all possess the same divine perfections ; for the perfections of the Deity are nothing, but his all-perfect Essence. As Christ then is truly God, he must be the self-same in essence, and equal in perfection, with the other divine Persons that necessarily co-exist with him in the same Godhead. For whatever notions of a generated, created, or subordinate divinity, mankind have imagined, there is nothing more certain, than that all real divinity is one and the same. The created Deity of the Arians, and the deified creature of the Socinians, are each of them a contradiction in terms ; to say nothing at present, of a begotten Deity or divine Person, in the sense in which both the modern refiners of the Arian scheme, and those who hold his supreme divinity have explained his generation. Such opinions, whatever their abettors may imagine, when examined to the bottom, are equally unphilosophical and unscriptural. They confound time with eternity, finite with infinite, the Creator with the creature. They confer infinite qualities on a finite subject ; and give the incommunicable essence and perfection of God Most High to beings dependent and infinitely inferiour to him, which is absurdity in the extreme. As all Scripture then affirms the Son to be God, and ascribes to him the highest perfections of God, so all Scripture and all reason, directed by Scripture, assure us that he is equal and the same in essence with the Father and Spirit ; and that not a perfection belongs to the divine Nature, nor to any of the personal subsistences into which that nature is essentially and necessarily distinguished, but belongs also to the divine Person of Christ.

II. But, beside this divine Nature or subsistence, the Scriptures assure us, that in the complex person of Christ, there is also a perfect human nature. By a perfect human nature, we mean a human soul or created spirit, formed for union with a human body, and a real human body with which that soul is connected. This human nature our Blessed Saviour assumed into union with his divine Person, that he might be Mediator between God and man; and the grand connecting bond, as we shall see, between God and his creation. As this part of our Saviour's person is also of the highest consequence to our hopes and happiness, like the former, it is declared with the fullest evidence. Some Scriptures affirm his human nature in general; others hold forth and certify particularly the constituent parts of it. As evidences of his human nature in general, he was foretold to be the seed of the woman, which should bruise the head of the serpent, *Gen. iii. 15.* to be the seed of Abraham, *Gal. iii. 16.* to be a son born of a Virgin, *Isai. vii. 14.* to be a branch out of the root of Jesse, *Isa. xi. 11.* and the Son of David, *Luke i. 32.* Accordingly the angel foretells to Mary that she should conceive and bring forth a Son, ver. 31. After his incarnation, the apostle Paul assures us that God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, *Gal. iv. 4.* that though he was in the form of God, yet he took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man, and was found in fashion as a man, *Phil. ii. 6—8.* And, in general, he declares, that in all things he was made like unto his brethren, *Heb. ii. 17.* All these Scriptures testify that he had a compleat human nature, for by the same

same language is the nature of man usually expressed.

But we have not only these evidences of his human nature in general; we are also certified particularly of his human soul and body of which that nature is composed. The noblest part of his humanity was his human soul; formed for union with his divine Person on the one part, and with his human body on the other, and as it were the proper bond of union between them. That his divine Person therefore did not actuate his human body as the Apollinarians imagined, but that he had a real human soul or a created spirit, similar though vastly superior to ours; besides the evidence mentioned, we have the most express declarations. Thus Isaiah foretells that God should "make the Saviour's soul an offering for sin;" that Christ should "see of the travel of his soul and be satisfied;" because he poured out his soul unto death, *Isai. liii. 10, 11, 12.* Thus we are told, on one occasion, "that Jesus rejoiced in spirit," *Luke x. 21.* and on another, that "he was troubled in spirit," *John xi. 23.* At the prospect of his last sufferings, he exclaims, "Now is my soul troubled," *John xii. 27.* Under his inutterable agony in the garden, before his bodily sufferings from men had begun, he cries out, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death," *Matt. xxvi. 38.* And at his expiration on the cross he commends his Spirit into his Father's hands; *Luke xxiii. 46.* which can apply neither to his divine nature, nor to his animal life, but to his human soul, which that day was to ascend into paradise.

What farther confirms the truth of his having a human soul is, the various powers and affections,

tions, inapplicable either to his divine person or to his human body, but perfectly characteristical of his human soul; which in Scripture are ascribed to him. Thus, besides his omniscient mind which he has as God, a finite understanding is affirmed of him. "For he increased in wisdom as well as in stature," *Luke ii. 52.* And of the day of judgment he as man did not know during his state of humiliation upon earth, *Mark xiii. 32.* A human will is appropriated by him, when he says to his Father, "Not my will but thine be done," *Luke xxii. 42:* for his divine will and that of his Father, like their divine nature, ever must be one and the same. And his various affections of grief, sorrow, joy, gladness, &c. of which a finite spirit or soul only can be susceptible, are frequently affirmed of him during his abode upon earth, *Mark iii. 5. Matt. xxvi. 38. Luke x. 21. John xi. 15.*

But as we have the most convincing proof of our Saviour's human soul, so we have every evidence that he likewise had a real human body. This all the predictions given of his birth by the Old Testament Prophets clearly imply, and the declarations of their accomplishment by the writers of the New Testament, confirm beyond all dispute. Thus St. John declares, "that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us," *John i. 14.* Christ affirms to his disciples during his life that he had flesh and blood, *John vi. 55.* and after his resurrection he bid them handle him, "for a spirit," says he, hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have," *Luke xxiv. 39.* Accordingly, St. Paul calls him "God manifested in the flesh," *1 Tim. iii. 16.* and assures us that "as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself like-

wise

“ wife took part of the same,” *Heb. ii. 14.* This truth is evident from his being conceived and born of the Virgin Mary, from his being circumcised, from his increasing in stature as in wisdom, from his being baptized, from his being subject to hunger, thirst, weariness and sleep; from his being apprehended, scourged, crowned with thorns, and crucified; from his being buried, and rising again from the dead; and in short from all his other actings and sufferings, that indisputably show him possessed of a human body.

Such then is the ample evidence the Scriptures afford us that our Blessed Saviour had not only a divine, but a human nature, in a reasonable soul and a true body. So that the ancient heretics that denied this, though less impious than those who denied his divinity, were equally unreasonable; since the evidence given us of both, is, to every candid and enquiring mind, beyond all contradiction.

III. One thing more we proposed here to ascertain with regard to this illustrious personage, *viz.* that these two natures, divine and human, are united and exist in one complex person. This indeed is evident from what hath been said; for if it is proved that Christ has both a divine and a human nature, and that both these are affirmed of the same general personage; then these natures must co-exist in one person, however distinct and different they are. The divinity dwells not in the humanity merely as it once did in the Jewish Tabernacle or Temple; without any other connexion but a visible residence in such places. Nor does it dwell in it merely as the Divine Spirit dwells and operates in the hearts of good men, as in his temples, *1 Cor. vi. 19.* but has no personal

sonal union with them. Were this all, the Spirit might be said to be incarnate as well as the Word; "for the Father giveth not the Spirit by measure unto his Son," *John* iii. 34. But revelation assures us, that the Divine Word dwells in the human nature of Christ, and is connected with it in union greatly more close and intimate than these. As in man a rational, spiritual soul, and a material, animal body, natures essentially different, are conjoined in one human person; so the Divine Word, and a compleat human nature, though essentially and infinitely distinct, are united in one Immanuel in the complex person of our Blessed Redeemer. Accordingly, while the most sacred oracles clearly affirm the divine and human natures of Christ, they as clearly, and by the very same evidence assure us, that these distinct natures are united and co-exist in one person. Thus *Isaiah* represents Christ as "the Child born," the Son given, and "the mighty God" the everlasting Father," *Isaiah* ix. 6. The Son, whom he foretells the Virgin was to bear, he affirms was to be Immanuel, God with us, or dwelling personally in our nature, for by that only could he dwell among us, and act for our interest, so that the name must be rather a personal, than an official one, and in its primary sense implies the personal union of the Divine Word with our human nature, *Isaiah* vii. 14. Jeremiah, or rather God by him, prophesies that Christ should, in the same person, be a branch unto David, and Jehovah our righteousness, *Jer.* xxiii. 5, 6. The union of the divine and human natures in one person St. John declares in the clearest manner, when he tells us, that the Word who in the beginning was with God,

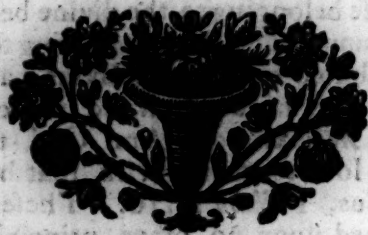
God; and was God, was at Christ's incarnation made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld, not their glories as two distinct persons; but his glory as the only begotten of the Father, in whose complex person both these natures were now united, *John* i. 2, 14. St. Paul represents these two natures under one person, when he affirms that Christ who was in the form of God, after assuming our nature, was found in the fashion of a man, and who in these two natures thus conjoined, first humbled himself, and was then exalted, *Phil.* ii. 6—9. To intimate this personal union he calls him God manifest in the flesh—preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world and received up into glory, *1 Tim.* iii. 16. He assures us, “that of the Jews, as concerning “the flesh, Christ came, who yet as to his divine “subsistence, comprehended in that general name “and person, is over all, God blessed for ever,” *Rom.* ix. 5. In like manner the same Son of God, who is represented as the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person; who, as God, made and upholds the world, and as God-man purged our sins, and then sat on the right hand of the throne of God, is always represented under one personal character, notwithstanding the two distinct natures that are plainly ascribed to him, *Heb.* i. 2, 3. And our Blessed Saviour, who must well have known the constitution of his own person, includes under it both his natures, while he affirms of himself in the same person, “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning “and the end, the first and the last,” which are the known characters of Deity in Scripture: yet he adds, “I am the root and the offspring of “David,” an evidence that with his Deity he possessed

possessed also a human nature and both co-existing in one complex person, *Rev.* xxii. 13, 16.

As a consequence and farther proof of the union of these natures in one person, the properties belonging to each nature are attributed to the same person. The actions proper to each nature are ascribed to the general person. The names expressive both of his divinity and humanity, and of these united together, as the Word of God, *Rev.* xix. 13. The Man-Christ Jesus, *1 Tim.* ii. 5. The Son of God, *Matth.* xxvi. 63. The Son of Man, ver. 34. Immanuel, *Matth.* i. 23. The second Man, and yet the Lord from Heaven, *1 Cor.* xv. 47. all these are indiscriminately ascribed to the one person of Christ. Nay the actions, and names, to the different natures, are from their co-existence in the same person sometimes reciprocated of each other, those belonging to the divine being ascribed to one of human, and those belonging to the human being attributed to one of a divine nature. Thus God is said to have purchased the church with his blood, *Acts* xx. 28. And God to have expressed his love to mankind in that he laid down his life for us, *1 John* iii. 16. These things can be explained upon no other principle than the conjunction of the Deity and humanity of our Saviour in one person. By such a personal union, every thing belonging to each of these natures may, in strictest language, be ascribed to the common person in whom they are united; and every thing belonging to, or done by, the general person, may be attributed to that person, characterised from either of the natures of which that person consists.

Thus it is evident from the clearest and fullest testimony of the inspired writings, that our
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Blessed Saviour is truly God and truly man; and that in one complex person, these natures, though perfectly distinct, are most intimately connected. These primary truths it was necessary to establish, as upon these our subsequent inquiries into our Saviour's sonship and dignity will hinge. But the fuller explication of the union of these natures, and of the glorious personage they compose, belongs to the subsequent departments of our plan.



C H A P. II.

Of Christ's being the Son, the begotten Son of God, the proper Import of that Character, and the improper and unscriptural Senses in which it has been applied to him.

HAVING proved that our Blessed Saviour possesses both a divine and human nature, and that these two natures are united in one person; we proceed next to show that this glorious person is God's Son, his begotten Son, to ascertain the proper notion of generation, and to show the improper and unscriptural senses in which Jesus has been held to be the Son of God.

1. The first thing here to be done is to prove that Christ is the Son, the begotten and proper Son of God ; for this is the fundamental article upon which the other parts of our plan do rest. That Christ in some sense is the Son of God, is so frequently and so expressly declared in Scripture, that of those who own revelation, none can deny, all have acknowledged it. Before his incarnation God the Father promises, " I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son," 2 Sam. vii. 14. Heb. i. 5. At his conception by the Blessed Virgin, the angel announced to her, " That the holy person that should be born of her should be called the Son of God," Luke i. 35. At his baptism, his divine Father proclaimed from Heaven with proper solemnity, Christ's filial relation to him. " This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," Matth. iii. 17. and with

with equal clearness and solemnity repeated it at his transfiguration, *Matth. xvii. 5*. Christ himself affirmed this his character and relation, calling God his Father, and declaring himself to be the Son of God, *John xvii. 1*. And his apostles being asked by their master, who they thought he was? unanimously replied, "Thou art Jesus, the Son of the living God, *John vi. 69*," and so frequently attested to this truth as makes any particular quotations altogether unnecessary.

But Christ is not only affirmed in Scripture to be God's Son; but his Son in the strict and proper sense of the word. By a proper Son we mean one who is not adopted, is not merely created, nor has any metaphorical filiation; but one who is really begotten of his Father, and derives his person from him by a proper generation. And in this natural and proper sense, all Scripture declares Christ to be the Son of God. Thus when God predicts the character of the glorious Messiah, he predicts him as his proper, his begotten Son. "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," *Psal. ii. 7*. When St. John purposely treats the birth and person of his divine master, he rests his Sonship on its proper foundation, his generation by the Father. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, as of the only begotten of the Father," *John i. 14*. Our Blessed Saviour himself claims this character upon the same ground, when he says, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, might not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world, to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved; he that believeth on him is not condemned, he that believeth not is condemned already,"

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already, because he believeth not on the only begotten Son of God," *John* iii. 16—18. St. Paul not only describes him as the Son of God, the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, which denote him clearly as God's proper Son, but gives us the most direct evidence of this important truth, by affirming, that when his Father bringeth the first-begotten into the world, he sayeth, "Let all the angels of God worship him," *Heb.* i. 2, 3, 6. Accordingly the same apostle, upon this natural and just foundation of Sonship, calls Christ God's own, or his proper Son. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how then shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" *Rom.* viii. 32. Such then are the numerous, clear and convincing proofs, divine revelation affords us that Christ is the Son, the begotten Son of God. And all these passages that represent him as the Son of God, represent him as such in his complex person. But this will be shewed more fully in its proper place. We proceed then,

II. To ascertain the just notion of generation, which is so uniformly affirmed to be the proper ground of our Saviour's Sonship. This is a matter of the utmost importance to a proper discovery and establishment of the truth we are investigating. The Sonship of our Blessed Saviour is uniformly expressed in the same language that is applied to the generated sons of men. Wherefore it is necessary to ascertain in what generation, as applied to human beings, essentially consists, that we may thence infer what it must import when applied to express the generation of the Son of God. From inaccurate ideas of generation, many, if not most of the erroneous notions con-

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cerning the Sonship of Christ have proceeded. And till this fundamental point is properly established, it is impossible with accuracy to determine in what character our Blessed Saviour is held forth to us in Scripture as the proper and begotten Son of God.

Generation or begetting is sometimes in Scripture, and in common language, applied to things without life, *Job. xxxviii. 28.* and sometimes to the conversion of mankind to religion, *1 Cor. iv. 15. 1 John v. 1, 18.* But this is only in a metaphorical sense. In strict language it is applicable only to the procreation of living beings; and when used for begetting sons, it is in Scripture restricted to the production of the human offspring; and from the analogy there is betwixt them, transferred to the generation of the Son of God. Generation consists not in the production of a being into existence, that had no sort of existence before. That is a creation, not a generation. According to the most accurate discoveries, every animal, and human being, exists in a living, animalcular state, previous to its generation. It exists in the father, partaker of his nature, and one with him in essence, yet distinguished from him by its individual subsistence. This its original existence and character depend not on the will of its father; but flow from the same constitution of nature as the father himself. Nor does generation consist in any future accession of paternal nature for the increase of this human principle. While it continues in this original state, it may exist with the father in the same manhood; but never is; nor can be called his son: and as it cannot be denominated the son of the father, much less can it have a filial relation to its mother, with whom it has only a capability of connexion, but is not yet connected.

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connected. In what then does generation properly consist? It consists in the union of this original living principle, communicated by the father as the chief constituent of the future child, with another and an additional substance derived from the mother in conception, forming the complex person procreated of both, and who from this generation, and participation of the substance of both parents, is when born into the world called the son of both. This is the general and acknowledged theory of generation. It supposes a pre-existence of the original living principle in the father, and which is of the same nature with him. It imports the accession of a proper substance also derived from the mother, as necessary to constitute the complex person or child, and give it connexion with, and relation and resemblance to, each of its parents. This is performed by the agency of the father, the activity of the original and originating principle, and the conception of the mother. The original principle continues through its future existence, as the chief constituent of the person begotten: yet by its union with an additional nature, its general character and name are changed. It is now called a son, a son begotten by his father, conceived and born of his mother, and partaking the nature of each parent, is indiscriminately denominated from the one, or from the other.

Such are the terms in which the generation and conception of our Blessed Saviour are expressed in Scripture, and such is their just import. When God represents the most important truths of religion, to be perceived and believed by his reasonable creatures, he must represent them in terms the most proper to express the things signified as

they really are; and to convey the knowledge of them with greatest clearness to our minds. If metaphors are used, they must be such as strongly resemble the things represented by them. In such figurative style, indeed, it is neither necessary nor possible that the agreement hold in every point. Yet it is absolutely necessary that it hold in the capital ones; otherwise the metaphor were used in vain; or, misrepresenting the thing meant to be described by it, were worse than vain. But when the thing represented is not only greatly analogous to that from which the representation is taken, but in many things the same with it; the agreement between the sign and the thing signified must be more full and particular. Such is the subject of our present consideration. In several particulars the Son of God in his generation and character must widely differ from, and infinitely transcend the generation of mere men by which it is explained to us; and there whatever corresponds not to the glorious subject must be removed, and the comparison stop. But the constant unlimited use of the metaphor, if we ought to call it such, by the God of truth, gives every Christian the highest reason to believe it will hold in all the instances in which the comparison is made and ought reasonably to be interpreted: and from the general resemblance of the subjects, we shall find that without either straining the metaphor, or degrading, in any respect, the divine person and character of our glorious Redeemer, it will apply in more instances, and contribute more to illustrate this important article of our holy religion, than at first view we may be apt to imagine. This declared analogy between the generation of the sons of men, and that of the Son of God, and the just notion wherein generation consists,

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sists, must be a proper touchstone for determining the true ground and import of our Saviour's Sonship. If in any of the explications that have been given of this article, the essential ideas of generation do not apply at all, we need no other evidence that such explications are false. The more fully any explication of the subject corresponds with those terms in which God has described it, the greater evidence we shall have of its truth; and that which holds in every essential point will carry every proof that it is the true one. We go on therefore

III. To shew the improper and imperfect senses in which our Saviour has been represented as the Son of God, and the mistaken or insufficient evidence upon which they have been founded. What some of these senses are, has been intimated in the Introduction: and many more are to be met with, especially among Socinian writers, who have represented their Saviour as the Son of God in every sense imaginable, however nugatory and improper, provided they could deprive him of what is not only his highest glory, but the chief ground of his being the begotten Son of God, the divinity of his person. But it were trifling to consider opinions that are not only without all shadow of evidence from revelation, or the nature of the thing, but clearly repugnant to both. The chief senses in which with any appearance of evidence Christ has been considered as the Son of God, are the four following, *viz.* 1. From the generation of his divine person by the Father from all eternity. 2. From the miraculous formation of his human nature by the power of God at his incarnation. 3. From his consecration by God to the character and office of Messiah. 4. From his resurrection by the divine power from the dead, and the dignity and honour to which

he was exalted. These we shall shortly examine in their order, and shall show that none of them answer properly to the character uniformly given him as the begotten Son of God, nor are supported with real evidence from Scripture.

1. The first and most received opinion in which Christ has been believed to be the Son of God, holds him to have been generated as second person of the Godhead by the first person from all eternity, by which the divine essence and perfections were communicated by the first person as the Father to the second, as a Son thus begotten of him. In this sense many of the fathers after the apostolic ages begun incautiously to consider Christ as the Son of God, which paved the way to Arianism. The Nicene and Post-Nicene fathers however adhered to this explication of his Sonship, imagining they could best maintain his co-essentiality with the Father in opposition to the Arians upon this ground. In this however there is a real mistake; for though by holding Christ thus begotten of the Father, they seemed to ensure to him the same essence, yet by giving him not an original self-existent, but a derived divinity, they deprived him of some of the most essential characters of supreme Deity, and so exposed the cause they meant to defend. The schoolmen afterwards, founding more upon the fathers and their own metaphysical theories, than upon an accurate study of the sacred oracles, made it the distinguishing character of the first person in the Godhead to generate the second; and the personal property of the second person, that he was generated by the first, and so held Christ to be the Son of God by the generation of his divine person. The divines of the reformed religion adhered to the doctrines of

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of the popish schoolmen in this article, as the best scheme they yet knew of, for maintaining the divinity of Christ against the attacks made upon it by Arians and Socinians. By this means the generation of the second person in the Godhead by the first, hath become a received article in the creeds and confessions of the Protestant churches; though many of our divines distinguished for piety, learning, and orthodoxy, have publickly called its truth and propriety in question. But no church since the days of the apostles is infallible. Many have erred, and all of them might have erred. The scriptures are the only sure foundation and infallible test of revealed religion, and of every article of it. And if we accurately examine this ground of our Saviour's Sonship by this unerring standard, we shall find that it has neither the propriety nor the evidence that has been generally believed.

Christ's Sonship, as we have shewed already, and will show more fully afterwards, is affirmed of his complex person in general, but this theory limits it to one nature only. Generation is not the production of a being that had no kind of existence previous to its generation. But this opinion gives the second person no proper and personal existence previous to his generation by the Father; for according to it every thing the Son has, is derived from the Father. If it should be said that the divine essence pre-existed to his generation, the answer is obvious, that that essence then belonged wholly to the Father, and could not belong to the Son, till once it was conveyed to him, or he produced of it. Generation is the union of a pre-existent, living principle, of the same nature, and necessary existence as the Father, with an additional substance derived from the mother;

by which a complex person is begotten, possessing the nature of both parents, and taking his filial name from both. But here the analogy does not hold in any one instance, but the sign totally contradicts the thing supposed to be signified by it. The Son, according to the scholastic explication, derives his whole essence and existence from the Father. He is not only begotten of, but however unintelligible it may seem, begotten in the Father. In his generation, no substance but from the Father is communicated to him. There is no complex person formed, no second parent from whom any part of a complex person is derived, and no foundation for different filial characters from different parents; for by the supposition, there is but one parent: so that however his production may be called a communication of essence or existence to another, it never with propriety can be called a generation: or if it were, the Holy Ghost, according to the received opinion of his personal procession, would with at least equal propriety be called the Son of the first and second, as the second can be called the Son of the first person.

But as this view of our Saviour's Sonship has no probability from the proper notion of generation, so it has as little proof from direct Scripture. The divine Logos, or second person of the Godhead, makes the principal constituent of the Son of God. On this account he is truly God, and the Son of God, and is affirmed to be so by the clearest evidence revelation can give. But the Scripture no where affirms that he is the Son of God by an eternal generation or production of his divine person; nor does it any where lead us to consider his Sonship in that light. The passage often quoted in proof of this from Ps. ii. 7.

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“Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee,” considered in itself as expressly denoting a generation in time, considered in connection with both contexts which contain a prediction of the Messiah or Word incarnate, considered in the sense of the Jewish paraphrasts, who all understood it of the Messiah in human nature, and considered in the light in which the inspired apostles considered it, even as descriptive of God manifested in the flesh, Acts xiii. 33. proves no such doctrine as the generation of eternal Deity; but, as we shall afterwards show, puts the Sonship of Christ upon a much more natural, scriptural and proper footing. The eighth chapter of Proverbs has often been brought in proof of this opinion, and particularly these parts of it: “The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was; when there were no depths I was brought forth, when he prepared the heavens, and when he appointed the foundations of the earth, then I was by him as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him, rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights were with the sons of men,” *Prov. viii. 22--31*. These words many have thought apply to our Blessed Saviour, and intimate the eternal generation of his divine person, as the Son of God. But this is building more upon them than the foundation will bear. There is perhaps no passage of Scripture of more uncertain and various interpretation than the one here mentioned. Of the most judicious interpreters, ancient and modern, some have understood it only of wisdom considered as a perfection of the Deity, and some of a person

in the Godhead. Of those in the last opinion, some of the fathers understood it of the Son, and some of the Holy Spirit. Of those who understood it of the Son, some applied it to his divine person; others extended it also to his human nature. The orthodox used it to prove Christ's eternal existence and supreme Divinity; the Arians employed it to prove that his Deity was only created and inferior; supported as they thought by the authority of the Septuagint version, which renders the word *κύριος* the Lord possessed me, by *ἐκτίσας* the Lord created me. And of late several writers from a conviction that it would neither apply well to supreme Divinity, nor could ever be understood of a created Deity, have considered it as importing the antemundane creation and pre-existence of Christ's human soul in union with the Divine Word, to which all these texts would be of more easy application. But if we accurately examine this passage, we shall find with many of the best interpreters, that there is no solid ground upon which it can be applied to Christ at all. Solomon, in this as in most parts of this book, is describing and recommending wisdom; by which he means, as Jews commonly did, that great intellectual and moral principle in the mind, either of God or man, by which we form the best and worthiest designs in mind, and carry them forward into a wise and a virtuous course of life. To give a clearer and nobler description of the comprehensive excellence, he by a figure frequent with all writers, and especially with Solomon, wherever wisdom is his theme, describes her under the image of a living person. Thus in the beginning of the chapter he represents her as a female, which shows he meant only a moral quality

quality or virtue, not the second person of the Godhead, who is always described in the masculine gender, *John* i. 3, 4. Throughout the first part of it he describes the happy influence of wisdom on individuals and kingdoms. To aggrandise our ideas of wisdom, and recommend her more effectually to our approbation and choice, he rises from man to God, and represents wisdom as co-essential and co-eval with the Divine Mind itself, called forth to direct his eternal councils, and accompanying every exertion of his power in creating the material, particularly the terrestrial system, and in adapting all things upon it for the benefit of man, who was to be lord of the whole. After which he represents wisdom as calling upon mankind to follow her dictates in all religion and virtue, in opposition to that course of folly and wickedness described before and after it. With this folly wisdom is here plainly contrasted; but that none might be at a loss what Solomon meant by it, he tells us in the conclusion of his noble panegyric, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding," chap. ix. 10. Thus there is nothing in this part of Scripture, accurately considered, that indicates any reference to the person of Christ. Its describing him not as a co-agent with God, as all Scripture represents the Divine Word in the works of creation, *John* i. 1, 2, 3. *Coh* i. 16. but as an attendant or companion, strongly intimates, that the wisdom which is common to all the persons in the Deity, not any particular person, was there meant. The total silence of the New Testament directs us to carry it no farther, as neither Christ nor any of his apostles make the remotest reference to it, which we

might have expected they would have done, if it had contained so eminent a proof of his Divinity or of his Sonship as has been afterwards imagined. But if we should even suppose it to relate to this great object, though there is no solid ground for it, yet it must be understood in a sense agreeable to the just import of the original text, agreeable to the nature of its supposed subject, and agreeable to the other passages of Scripture, that treat that subject in a clearer manner, in which case it would neither prove the eternally begotten, yet supreme Deity of the Athanasians, nor the created Deity of the Arians; as, if necessary, or consistent with the brevity of our plan, were easy to demonstrate.

Agur's question related *Prov. xxx. 4.* "What is his name, or what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?" has also been urged in evidence, that Christ is the Son of God, by the generation of his divine person. But this also, when properly examined, falls short of the point. By many of the most judicious interpreters, this passage has been understood to relate not to God, but to man. The Prophet, having been consulted by his scholars Ithiel and Ucal, on many subjects regarding God and his works, he, with that modesty that is ever attendant on true wisdom, expresses his imperfection in knowledge; and that neither he nor any other man that ever lived could fully explain these sublime subjects. For who hath ascended up into heaven, says he, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, if there ever was such a man? or if he himself has been long dead, what is the name of his son or off-spring?

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Others finding that the word *Ithiel* signifies in the Hebrew language, *God with me*; and that Christ seems to have alluded to Agur's question, when he says, no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven, *John* iii. 13. have, by a less natural explication, applied this passage to God and his Son. But in neither of these senses will it prove that the second person of the Godhead derived his divine person by generation from the first. The former sense has not the smallest relation to this subject: and the latter, if we should admit it on its own principles, as prophesied by Agur, and applied by Christ, would represent him as the Son of God; not as God only, but as God-man; or as Christ himself explains it, the Son of man, which includes not only his divine but his human nature.

Several texts have also been brought from the New Testament in proof of this notion of our Saviour's Sonship, but they are equally inconclusive. St. John, when he assures us, that Christ is "the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, and who hath declared him," *John* i. 18. affirms Christ to be the begotten Son of God; but not as to his divine person only, as many have injudiciously thought, but as to his complex person: for in that character he had declared God to man, and in that character he had ascended to God, and was then in his bosom. The declaration of our Blessed Saviour, that he and his Father are one, *John* x. 30. proves the unity of their divine essence, demonstrates at the same time that they are different persons, and evinces that they are somehow related as Father and Son; but neither determines the ground of paternal character in the one,

one, nor of filial relation in the other; or if it does, implies that Christ is the Son of God in the complex personage in which he then existed and called God his Father, which, so far from proving the eternal generation of his divine person, proves, as we shall see, something very different. In like manner the passage in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, i. 8. "To the Son he sayeth, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, the "sceptre of thy kingdom is a sceptre of righteousness," proves beyond all dispute that the Son of God is God, and that his divine nature is essential to his Sonship and the chief ground of it: but affirms not that he is God's Son in this nature only, or that he holds his divine existence by any act of generation. It is taken from the xlvth *Psalms*, which contains a prophetic description of the person and kingdom of the glorious Messiah, or Word incarnate. In this sense it is applied to Christ by the Apostle, and in place of proving that he became the Son of God, by the eternal generation of his divine person, it proves that he was God, co-essential, co-equal, and co-eternal with the Father, and was begotten as his Son, when he was incarnate as Messiah.

Nor will the expressions of Christ's coming forth from the Father, of God's sending his Son into the world, and of the Son of God his being manifested to take away our sins and destroy the works of the devil, prove Christ to have existed as Son of God previous to his incarnation. For these phrases, with equal propriety of language and more consonancy to Scripture, will apply to his appearance as God-man. In common language a man is said to come into the world when he is born; and revelation adopts the
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common language of mankind, to convey its truths to them. Yet that we may have no doubt in a matter of so much importance, it assures us that this and nothing else is the proper meaning of the expressions mentioned. Thus says Christ, "I came forth from the Father and am come into the world, and I leave the world and go to the Father," *John* xvi. 28. where, as the last clause plainly describes him as the Word made flesh and dwelling among mankind; so must the first. "As the Father hath sent me into the world," says Christ, so send I you into the world," *John* xvii. 13. where the first must relate to the mission of Christ as Messiah the Saviour, as the last expresses Christ's commission to his apostles to be the ministers of his salvation. And when it is said, "the Son of God was manifested to take away our sins," or "to destroy the works of the devil," *1 John* iii. 5, 8. the meaning of it is plainly this, that God was then manifested in the flesh, *1 Tim.* iii. 16. for in this complex person only did he appear and accomplish these events. So that these passages, if they denote Christ to be Son of God, hold him forth to be so, not by any generation of him as God from eternity, but as God-man in the fulness of time.

But it is unnecessary to insist longer upon these or other passages from the New Testament, that have been quoted to prove our Saviour the Son of God, as he is second person of the Godhead, begotten of the first from all eternity, as there is no passage in Scripture that holds forth any such doctrine.

That Christ is God, or a divine person co-existing with the other persons in the same Godhead, revelation gives us innumerable evidences:

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that he is a begotten God, or holds his existence, by generation, there is not one. That his character, Son of God, and begotten Son of God, includes his divine person, and is founded in the union of that divine person with his human nature, the whole tenor of revelation demonstrates; but it gives us no reason to believe him the Son of God in any other sense. Some hundred times is Christ mentioned as the Son of God, in the sacred Scriptures, but never in one instance as he is God only. And these texts that have been misapplied to his divine person only as God, we shall clearly shew in the next chapter do all relate to his complex person as God-man.

Improbable from the declared ground of our Saviour's Sonship, and unproved by any evidence of Scripture, this doctrine has as little support from its congruity to the divine nature, or its necessity to preserve the supreme divinity of the Son; but much the contrary. We know little of the divine essence and manner of existence, and should speak of them modestly. But according to the best notions we can form of it, from reason or revelation, the Deity must be one: infinite, immutable, all-perfect, and all blessed nature; comprehending in it a Trinity of personal subsistences, co-essential with that nature, and with one another, and so all of the same necessary existence, of the same self-existence, of the same eternity, of the same infinite and universal perfection with that divine essence in which they all exist, and with each other as being the same in essence, and in all essential perfections, however distinguished in personal subsistence. This puts the doctrine of the Trinity more upon its truly natural and scriptural foundation, than the scholastic

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scholastic theory admitted into the churches, of one divine person begetting another divine person, and yet this second divine person co-eternal with the first who begat him, and these divine persons again producing a third divine person, who yet is co-eternal with the former ones, which at first sight seems inconsistent with the immutability of the divine nature and the self-existence and supreme Deity of the Word and Spirit. Such a theogony might easily be received by the heathen Polytheists, but is without all solid foundation in the inspired oracles. It hath involved the Christian doctrine of the Trinity in difficulties inexplicable: and while it hath been thought to strengthen and secure the divinity of the Son, it hath in reality weakened it. It gives him nothing but a derived communicated divinity or divine existence, when all Scripture, and all reason as directed by Scripture, holds all real divinity to be equal and the same; and by this means it has given a greater advantage to the enemies of our Saviour's Godhead, and of the Christian religion in general, than perhaps any thing besides.

2. Sensible of the impropriety of this doctrine, and of the insufficiency of its evidence, others have held Christ to be the Son of God from his human nature only, and its miraculous formation by the divine power in the Blessed Virgin. This explication has been adopted both by friends and by enemies to our Saviour's divinity: by its friends, to secure his supreme Deity against the objections to it drawn from its being generated by the Father: and by its enemies, to get free of the argument for his real Deity drawn from the same generation. The Semiarrians, who hold Christ to have a divinity, but inferior to supreme Godhead, adhere

adhere to the former explication of his Sonship; we have considered and exposed. The Socinians, who deny the proper divinity of their Redeemer altogether, and hold him to be nothing but a creature more exalted and God-like, have embraced the exposition of it we are now to consider. But as little can this explication be admitted, if either the testimony of revelation, or the nature of the thing is allowed to be decisive. To suppose Christ to be the Son of God merely from the preternatural formation of his human nature by the divine power, will neither agree with the natural ground and criterion of this character, his generation by the Father, nor is supported by proper and direct evidence from Scripture. The character, Son of God, is given in Scripture, to his complex person, and so includes both the natures that therein co-exist. But this explication limits it to one of them, and to the one too which is infinitely the lowest. Generation requires that the principal constituent of the Son be of the same nature with his Father, pre-exist with him as a living principle in the same substance, and be communicated by him to unite with another nature derived from the mother so as to constitute the complex person generated the Son of both. But in no instance will this apply to the mere formation of the human nature of Christ. It never was and never can be of the same nature with God. It never pre-existed in God as a distinct yet consubstantial principle in his essence. It never was communicated from that essence to the Virgin Mother, so as to denominate her Son in any propriety of language the begotten Son of God. His human soul, as it was to exist in union with a divine person, we may well believe was created a spirit of the noblest

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blest nature and the highest endowments. But, as all the characters formerly mentioned as belonging to it testify, it was still but a creature, however exalted. As all others spirits were, and as all finite spirits must be, it was created from non-existence into being by his almighty power: This therefore was not a generation, but a creation; and being common to Christ with every individual of the human kind could not confer upon him the peculiar and distinguishing character, the only begotten Son of God. His body too was foretold to be prepared by God, *Psal. xl. 6. Heb. x. 5.* and was formed by the power of the Holy Spirit, *Luke i. 35.* But this, though a supernatural formation, was not a proper generation. The originating principle of his body was not of the substance of the Divine Spirit, nor conveyed from him, but organized of the substance of the Virgin Mary. If this were meant of his generation, it would make Christ as much the Son of the third as of the first person, which is never affirmed of him. But it can no more be called a generation, and contains nothing more divine than the formation of the body of Adam from the earth, or of Eve of a part from Adam's side, which persons, though sons of God by creation, never are and never can be called his begotten children.

As this opinion has not the smallest evidence from the nature of generation, it has as little from express declarations of Scripture. These divine oracles always include Christ's humanity in their representations of his Sonship, but never rest it on that nature alone. They inform us that the Holy Ghost came upon the Blessed Virgin, and that the power of the Highest did overshadow her, and that therefore also, or upon this account,

count, in connection with some higher one, that holy thing that should be born of her should be called the Son of God, *Luke i. 35*. They assure us, it was God's Son whom the husbandmen agreed among themselves to kill, *Luke xx. 13, 14*. God's Son, who as to his human nature while on earth, knew not the time appointed of God for the judgment of the world, *Mark. xiii. 32*. the Son of God, whom God spared not but delivered him up for us all, *Rom. viii. 32*. and through whose death, when we were enemies we were reconciled to God, *Rom. v. 10*. All these Scriptures evince that the Son of God possesses a human as well as a divine nature, and some of them that his person, as Son, consists of both. But that this distinguishing incommunicable character of the begotten, the only begotten Son of God is founded merely in the formation of his human nature, no revelation of God has declared, the nature of the thing does not admit, and no judicious man will believe. The former opinion placed the foundation of his Sonship too high, to consist with his self-existent and supreme Divinity; this places it too low, to constitute the high character of the begotten Son of God. The first, from being God necessarily existent, and co-eternal with the other persons, reduces him to a generated, derived and dependent divinity. The second, of man, raises him to be the begotten Son of God, which Scripture and reason assure us, must imply divinity. And both separate what they ought to have conjoined, and rest his Sonship on one of his natures, when, as we shall show, it consists in the proper conjunction of them.

3. Convinced therefore that in neither of these views Christ can justly be considered as the Son
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of God, others have applied this distinguishing character to the office of Messiah or Mediator, with which he was by the Father invested. This opinion many of the Socinians have embraced, that it might free them from believing their Saviour's divinity, against which, in opposition to Scripture, in opposition to the general faith of the Christian church, and in opposition to the natural propension of mankind, to glory in the dignity of the author of their religion, these strange Christians have a most unreasonable prejudice. Some of the firmest friends of our Lord's divinity have of late also espoused this explication of his Sonship, rather than admit either of the former ones, which are neither probable in themselves, nor proved by Scripture. This explication has indeed one advantage over both the preceding ones, viz. that it holds Christ in his whole mediatorial person to be the Son of God, as the Scripture clearly holds him to be, and so includes both his natures, one or other of which the former opinions left out. Yet it labours under a greater inconvenience and impropriety than either of them: it confounds the most distinct personal with a merely official title: it overlooks the substantial person evidently characterized in Scripture as God's begotten Son, and applies a personal name, not to the person it describes, but to the office he bears. This opinion, though patronized by names I much love and honour, is without all solid foundation, either in the object it relates to, or in the declarations of Scripture. It applies most improperly to the term Son, and is totally inconsistent with the title of a begotten, an only begotten one. In the former explication the characteristical ground of our Saviour's filiation and person, might have some application, though
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very imperfect; but in this it can have none. Every idea of generation and Sonship is totally excluded, and the most express and uniform declarations of them in Scripture are intirely perverted into metaphor and impropriety.

As this opinion is inconsistent with the general terms in which revelation affirms and explains our Saviour's sonship, it cannot be expected to have support from any particular parts of it. Those words of our Blessed Saviour to the Jews, "Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God," *John* x. 36, have been often adduced in proof of this doctrine, but do not prove it. Our Saviour in his public discourse had called God his Father, and affirmed that he and his Father were one, ver. 30. The Jews thereupon accused him of blasphemy, who being in their apprehension a man only, called himself God and the Son of God. Jesus, in vindication of what he had said, refers his adversaries to a part of their own inspired writings, *Psalms* lxxxii. 6. where princes or prophets to whom the word of God came, investing them with these offices, are called Gods and children of the Most High: and if such persons, from their mere commission from God, and in language plainly metaphorical, were called children of God, much more may he whom the Father had sanctified or consecrated to the office of Messiah by the union of a divine person with his holy human nature, *Luke* i. 35. and who as his begotten Son was sent into the world, affirm himself to be the Son of God. They were God's sons by consecration and office, he was God's Son by generation also and in person. They became the sons of God after they came into the world, and

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and when called to their office; Christ was born into the world in this character, and held it not by his consecration, at his baptism, as some have imagined, but was the Son of God, as the Scripture often testifies, from his conception and birth. Their sonship, like the divinity there ascribed to them, was merely figurative, but his was natural and proper. This sonship Christ did not think fit at that time particularly to explain, any more than his essential unity with his Father. But from the general characters in which he describes it as being brought with him into the world, he intimates, it was not merely official and metaphorical, like that of the persons he refers to, but that he was the Son of God, not in that only, but in a much higher sense, and which can apply to none but himself, his truly begotten and proper Son. Many passages of Scripture affirm the Son of God to be the Messiah, and call Messiah, or Christ, the Son of God. These show that the characters Son of God and Messiah apply to the same person, but not that they are applied to him on the same ground. The first relates to his person, and denotes his filial relation to his Father: the second expresses his office, and that to that office he was anointed and consecrated by him. His being consecrated to the office of Mediator may imply that he is the Son of God, for none else can possess that character and discharge the offices of it; but it is never assigned in Scripture, and in the nature of things never can be assigned as the foundation of his Sonship.

4. One explication more has been given of our Saviour's Sonship that merits any consideration, which is, that he is so called on account of his resurrection by the divine power from the dead.

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But this is equally improper and unsupported as the former. He was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead," *Rom. i. 4.* But this did not make him God's Son, but only declared him to be so. He is called the first-begotten and the first-born from the dead, *Rev. i. 18.* and *5.* for the word in both places is the same. But this does not express that proper generation by which he became the Son of God, for God, angels and men, had all ascribed this generation and Sonship to him before. This generation we shall see commenced at his incarnation, when the divine eternal Word was made flesh; and as he resumed this flesh, and entered anew upon his complete life, his resurrection is represented as a sort of regeneration. It did not constitute him the Son of God, but only refers us to the proper ground of it. His incarnation declares this character, Son of God, to belong to Christ, and raises Christ to the honour due to this character. These things are so evident in themselves as to require no confirmation. Christ is God's begotten Son, which his resurrection did attest, and necessarily supposed, but could not constitute. And he is called his only begotten Son, by which he is personally distinguished and exalted above the whole creation; but multitudes rose with him at his resurrection, and the whole world shall be raised by him at the last day. Such are the chief opinions upon this long debated subject. They have all arisen from inaccurate ideas of generation, a partial view of the glorious person it is affirmed of, and an attention only to those Scriptures that seemed in any degree to support the different theories

theories which different writers have adopted on this article, without considering the doctrine of Scripture in general. None of them agree with the declared ground of our Saviour's Sonship, his proper generation by the Father. None of them are supported by any clear, general and consistent voice of revelation. Some of them are altogether false and foreign to the subject; and those which have any relation to it, exhibit often such mistaken, and always such imperfect views of it, as come greatly short of the real truth. But the proper exhibition and establishment of this point shall be the subject of the next chapter.



C H A P. III.

*Of the proper and Scriptural Sense in which
Christ Jesus is the Son of God.*

I Have proved that in the person of our Blessed Saviour, there co-exist two distinct natures, divinity and humanity, with all the essential properties belonging to each. I have showed that this complex person is called the Son of God, his proper, his begotten; his peculiar, his only begotten Son. I have ascertained the proper notion of generation, and have exposed the improper and unscriptural senses in which this character of our Saviour has been hitherto explained. I proceed now to show directly in what sense Christ is the Son of God, and to establish this point by unquestionable evidence.

1. Son is a personal name, and must therefore be understood as relating immediately to the person of Christ. As this glorious person contains two natures, the divine and the human, he can be conceived to be the Son of God in three respects, and in three only. These are, the generation of his divinity, as second person in the Godhead; the supernatural formation of his human nature, by the power of God; or, lastly, the union of these two natures in his incarnation, producing his complex person, as God-man. The first we have showed is too high to consist with the equal divinity, eternity, and self-existence, which every person in the same immutable Deity must possess. The second is too low to found the high character which, in supereminence to God's whole created offspring, is ascribed

ascribed to Christ, even that he is God's only begotten Son. A generated God seems so repugnant to our best notions of Deity, that as men we can never conceive it; and having no real foundation in Scripture, as Christians we cannot believe it. A generated man, if a man only, and begotten of man, we can easily comprehend; but a mere man, begotten by God, is inconceivable and impossible; and therefore Christ can as little be the Son of God in this respect. But as these seem both of them impossible, so both of them are repugnant to every idea of generation, which the Scripture always assigns as the proper ground of the Sonship of Christ. A generation of the first person by the second might be a production; or if in the same numerical essence, would be a reproduction of the same essence under another subsistence, not a generation. In like manner the production of Christ's human nature may be called a creation, with regard to his soul, and a formation, with respect of his body; but neither can be called a generation; much less such a generation as could constitute him the Son of God, which requires him to have a divine constituent principle, and that principle communicated from the Father. But as these explications are incompatible with the natures of Christ, so we have showed they have as little consistency with, or evidence from, Scripture. As both his Deity and humanity unite in the person of Christ, the Son of God is sometimes characterised from the one nature, and sometimes from the other. And this is one chief reason why different and opposite theorists have not only gone into different opinions, but have some appearance of evidence from Scripture in support of them. But though revelation sometimes holds forth the

Son of God in one nature and sometimes in another, it never, in one instance, restricts his Sonship to either of these natures alone, but always includes also the other nature. This we showed in all those passages that proved Christ, in his general person, to be the Son of God, and will show more fully in the sequel of this chapter. But what does all this import? If, according to the clearest dictates of reason and revelation, Christ neither is nor can be the Son of God in the first nor in the second of these senses mentioned, he must be so in the third. If he is not the Son of God from the generation either of his divine or of his human nature, he must of necessity be his Son on account of the proper conjunction of them in one complex person, for there is no other personal respect in which this personal and relative name can be given him.

2. That Christ is the Son of God in this sense will be farther evident when it is considered that this agrees perfectly with the notion of generation, which is uniformly declared in Scripture to be the foundation of our Saviour's Sonship, and consequently is the criterion and test by which the proper sense of this character must be determined. Without this essential criterion every theory that can be adopted is rendered incapable of other proof. But possessed of this, an explication of this article is not only susceptible of other Scriptural evidence, but carries the fundamental evidence of its truth in its own bosom. The want of this must for ever reprobate the former explications; for to none of them would the essential ideas of generation apply. But what confirms this sense is, that the character of a begotten Son requires this explication; it can hold with propriety in no other; and holds in this with
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amazing exactness, in every proper and necessary point of comparison. Thus for instance does generation signify not a production of a substance, or even of a simple person that had no existence before, but the production of a complex person from a pre-existent living principle; the person of Christ is chiefly constituted of the pre-existent eternal Logos, or second person in the Godhead. Does the pre-existent principle exist in the general substance of the Father, and partake of the same nature under a different subsistence; the second person of the Godhead possesses the same nature, and what is more, the same numerical nature with the first, and possesses that nature also under a distinct personal subsistence. Is the pre-existent living principle in human generation, not the result of the Father's will, nor dependent upon it for existence, but exists in and with him, by the same law or necessity of nature as himself exists; so the divine Logos co-exists with the other divine persons in the same divine essence, and by the same necessity of nature, by which the divinity in general, and every personal subsistence in that divinity does exist. Does human generation consist in the union of this original living principle, with an accessory substance derived from the female parent; or in an accession of such substance to the original principle; so this divine generation consists in the union of the divine Logos, not only with a human soul created by God, but with a human body also derived from the substance of the Blessed Virgin, and both united with the Divine Word. Is this addition to the original principle made by the generation of the Father, the conception of the mother, and the energy of the living principle; so God the Father, by whose peculiar agency this human nature was formed and united to his

Divine Word, is affirmed to have begotten this glorious person, *Psalms* ii. 6. The Blessed Virgin of whom his body was formed is said to have conceived and born him, *Isaiah* vii. 14. And the Word to have partook of human nature, and to be made in human flesh, *Heb.* ii. 14. *John* i. 14. From this union of the original principle with the accessory substance, is there constituted and produced a more visible and complex person, possessing the nature of both parents, and taking its denomination of Son from both, but chiefly from the Father, from whom the chief constituent of its person was derived; so from the incarnation of the Divine Word, is constituted the complex person of Immanuel, partaking perfectly the nature of God and of man, called not unfrequently nor improperly the Son of Man, yet chiefly and most frequently the Son of God. Is a Son sprung of both parents the best pledge of their love, so we shall find this glorious God-man is the best pledge of friendship between God and man, and formed for every office of Mediator betwixt them. Such is the amazing agreement between the incarnation of the Divine Word and human generation. To no other view of our Saviour's person that ever has been given do these primary evidences of his Sonship apply. To no other view that can be given of him can they apply. In every essential and necessary point do they apply to our Saviour's incarnation, and the constitution of his complex person, which we have here assigned as the foundation of his Sonship, and therefore they furnish a most convincing evidence that in this sense, and in this only, is Christ Jesus the Son of God.

3. Let us consult at large the sacred oracles, and we shall find them giving their unanimous declaration in proof of this doctrine.

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The essential ideas of generation, by which our Saviour's Sonship is defined in Scripture, are the first and general marks by which we are to determine the true ground of this distinguishing title. But we are not wholly left to such physiological analogies to investigate and ascertain a truth of such infinite and universal importance to mankind. Besides these general characteristics of our Saviour's Sonship, God hath given us many particular and clear declarations of Scripture, describing the person to whom this character, Son of God, belongs, and directing us to judge upon what ground he possesses it. Let us then consider accurately the Scriptures of truth, and we shall find that whenever the blessed Jesus is described as the Son of God, it is with regard to his complex person, and whenever he is characterized as the begotten Son of God, it is in regard to the production of that complex person, by the union of the two natures of which it is composed.

One of the first and most noted declarations of our Saviour's Sonship is that prophetic one given of him by his divine Father himself, *Psal. ii. 7.* "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." This Psalm, as every part of it indicates, and the best interpreters are agreed, contains a prediction of the glorious prince Messiah, God in our nature. The words quoted declare him to be God's Son, his begotten Son, begotten however, not from eternity, but expressly affirmed to be begotten this day, even at that auspicious æra when he was to appear as Messiah, and when the other events here predicted of him in that character were also to be accomplished. In this clear and natural sense the Jewish paraphrasts understood this passage; as *Tehillim Rabbathi*, the *Midrash*, *Abenezra*,
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and other expositors of it testify. But what is an infinitely higher confirmation, and must put the true meaning and application of it beyond all dispute is, that an inspired Apostle has frequently quoted this Psalm, and this particular passage of it, as predictive of our Saviour, and never understood it as applying to him before, but only after, his incarnation. *Acts* xiii. 33. *Heb.* i. 5. and v. 5. In the 89th Psalm, which in its ultimate sense both Jews and Christians have ever considered as prophetic of the Son of God, Christ is foretold as saying to his Father, "Thou art my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation," and his Father as promising that he would "make him his first-born, higher than the kings of the earth," *Psalm* lxxxix. 26, 27. All which agree neither with his divine person only, or with his human nature only, but most exactly with his complex person, and so indicate that God is his Father, and he the Son of God in that respect.

Isaiah, as directed of God, thus foretells the birth and character of this Son of God, and rests both upon the same foundation. "Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel," *Isaiah* vii. 14. who, as his name imports, and the inspired Evangelist hath rendered it, *Matt.* i. 23, is God with us. Accordingly, when the same evangelic prophet describes this person as born and manifested, he says, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given;" clearly implying that as in human generation a child is not called a son till it is born, so neither did Christ become the Son, either of God or of man, untill the generation and birth of his person as Immanuel. Correspondent to this generation, and to the complex person generated,
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are the names and offices by which he is immediately described. "The government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the prince of peace, of the increase of whose government and peace there shall be no end." *Isaiah* ix. 6, 7. All which characters apply to his complex person, and to that only, and so all intimate that the Son here foretold, was to be God and Man in one person, and that by the union of these two natures in the Virgin's womb was this wonderful and glorious person to be procreated. If from the Jewish we come forward to the Christian revelation, we shall find this fundamental article of revealed religion ascertained by still clearer and more decisive evidence.

When the Angel Gabriel foretells to the Blessed Virgin our Saviour's conception and birth, he says, "Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus; he shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest:" that is, according to the sacred language, which calleth persons and things what they really are, he shall be the Son of God Most High; "And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his Father David, and he shall reign over the house of Judah for ever and ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end," *Luke* i. 31—33. This is the fulfilment of *Isaiah's* prophecy, and the glorious Immanuel is now to be conceived and brought forth; who is called, in the same person, the Son of God Most High, and the Son of David; which plainly intimates that his Sonship, both divine and human, apply to him as God-man; and consequently that his generation consists in the uni-

tion of these natures in his complex person. The astonished Virgin having asked how this mysterious generation and conception should be effected, the Angel answers her in terms which both explain and confirm this important truth. "The Holy Ghost (says he) shall come upon thee," viz. to form the Saviour's body of thy substance, as the Father, we may believe, created his human soul. It is added, "and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." This Divine Power is distinguished from the Spirit, and is, I think, to be understood not merely of the omnipotence of God; but of the second person in the Godhead, who in the Scriptures and the ancient church, both Jewish and Christian, was often represented as the Power of God; and who, notwithstanding he was to have a principal concern here, is not otherwise mentioned. "The substantial Power of the Most High or divine Logos shall overshadow thee," and assume into personal union with himself this soul and body formed by the other persons; in consequence of all which, adds the Angel, that holy thing generated in or born of thee, shall be called the Son of God, *Luke i. 34, 35.*

St. John, when he treats of our Saviour's person, represents his Sonship in the very same light. "In the beginning (says he) was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," *John i. 1, 2.* Here is his proper character as second person in the Godhead, distinct in subsistence from the other persons, yet of the same divine essence. But how does this divine person, co-eternal and co-essential with the first, become the Son of God? Of this St. John clearly in-
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forms us at the 14th verse: "The Word (says he) " was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we " beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begot- " ten of the Father," and who had become such, by this accession of humanity, by the Divine Power, to his original divinity, as is plainly intimated. Accordingly, this apostle, who had repeatedly called Christ before his incarnation, the Word, as uniformly after it, calls him the Son, and the only begotten Son of God, *John* i. 18.—iii. 16, 17. In like manner when he represents the Tri- nity in their proper divine characters bearing witness to this great truth, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and Saviour of the World, *1 John* v. 7. he represents them not as the Fa- ther, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; but as the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; by which that inspired apostle still shows that by the Word he meant Christ's divine person as se- cond subsistence in the Godhead, and by Son of God, his complex person as God-man, the Sa- viour of the world.

When Christ was solemnly consecrated to his office of mediator at his baptism, the Father declared from heaven, in such language as all pre- sent might be supposed to understand, that this person in human nature, who was now baptized, was his beloved Son, *Matth.* iii. 17. When the same Jesus was afterwards transfigured upon the mount, God his Father, with similar clearness and solemnity, repeated his attestation to this cha- racter, *Matth.* xvii. 5. uniformly declaring him his Son, in the character he then appeared in, as the Word made flesh, and dwelling among man- kind.

The same is the account of his filial person and character given us by Christ himself, who,

all will acknowledge, must have well known it. Having asked the blind man whom he had cured, if he believed on the Son of God? the man answers, "Who is he, Lord, that I may believe on him?" Jesus replies, "Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee," *John xi. 35—37.* And when solemnly addressing his Father in prospect of his last sufferings, and of the glory that was to follow, he says, "Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee," *John xvii. 1.* in both which instances he clearly applies the title Son of God to his complex person, and the filial relation it had given him to God as his Father.

In the same view do the Apostles uniformly consider their master as the Son of God. Thus when Christ asked them, whom say ye that I am? Peter, in his own name, and in the name of the whole, replied, "Thou art Christ the Son of the living God." *Matthew xvi. 16.* St. Paul writing to the Romans, affirms, that the Son of God, Christ Jesus, "was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, but was declared to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead," *Rom. i. 3. 4.* Writing to the Galatians he says, that "when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman." In which passages he clearly shews that the character, Son of God, denotes his complex person; and that by the same incarnation, by which he became the Son of man, he became also, and at the same time, the Son of God. But in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Hebrews, he not only affirms, but by a chain of evidence demonstrates this important truth. To confirm his believing countrymen in the Christian faith, and to convert the unbelievers, who denied Jesus

Jesus of Nazareth to be the Son of God, the Apostle begins with ascertaining the Sonship and personal dignity of Christ, and his infinite superiority both to angels, and to those men by whom the Jewish religion was introduced or supported, thereby effectually to recommend to them the religion of Jesus. He tells them that "God hath in these last days spoken unto them by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things," which implies that the Son of God is man, for as God he has a natural right to all things; yet to show that this Son was God as well as man, it is added, that by him "God made the worlds," pointing him out as God's co-essential Memra or Logos, by whom the Jews believed all things were created. This Son the Apostle farther describes as "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power," which must relate chiefly to his divinity. Yet to show that this same Son of God contained a human as well as a divine nature, he describes him also as "purging our sins, and then sitting down on the right hand of the Majesty on high," which plainly includes his human nature, verse 3. He explains in the same sense, and applies to the same complex person of Christ, as we have done, that passage in the 2d Psalm, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee:" Which explication he farther confirms from the promise of the Messiah made by God unto David, and of whom Solomon was a type, 2 Sam. vii. 14. "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son," predicting the generation and appearance of the Son of God, in that future period when he should be born into the world. He tells us,

ver,

ver. 6. that "when God bringeth in the first-begotten into the world; he saith, let all the angels of God worship him," which shows, that though as second person in the Godhead, he was prior to all creatures, and created them, yet as Son of God, or the first begotten, he was posterior to the angels; and when he was brought forth in that character, at his incarnation on this earth, and exhibited in his proper glory at his ascension into heaven, all the angelic tribes were commanded to worship him. At the 8th verse he represents God the Father addressing his exalted Son, in that noble prophetic description of him contained in the 45th Psalm, "To the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever;" which declares in highest terms his divinity: yet it is added, "A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom, thou lovest righteousness and hatest iniquity, therefore God, even thy God hath anointed thee, with the oil of gladness above thy fellows;" which as clearly affirms also his humanity; and both these natures being by God affirmed of him as his Son, proves, if the testimony of God, and his inspired servants can prove it, that in both these natures, Jesus is the Son of God.

Such are the numerous, clear and demonstrative proofs revelation gives us, that Christ as God-man is the Son of God, and that his generation consisted in the union of the second person in the Godhead, with his human nature at his incarnation. Many of these passages clearly determine the Son's generation, to the incarnation of the Divine Word: all of them hold forth Christ to be the Son of God, as he is God in our nature, which proves his generation to be the same. And of the numerous other passages

of Scripture that mention Christ as the Son of God, there is not one that I can find that represents him in this character either as he is God only, or man only, but all of them, as he is God-man, the Son of both, and the friend of both.

4. What further proves Christ to be the Son of God, as he is God-man, is, that the name Son of God, is in Scripture joined with all those other characters of Christ, both personal and official, which describe our Saviour in his complex person. These characters are the Son of Man, Christ or Messiah, Jesus or the Saviour, together with the offices he executes in effecting our salvation. All these describe our Saviour in his compound person; and if we consult the Scriptures, we shall find, that with all these the term Son of God is joined, and always used as descriptive of the same person to which these are ascribed.

The same person who is called the Son of God, is called too the Son of Man. Thus, the same child Jesus, whom the Virgin was to bear, the angel declares should be both "the Son of the Highest, and the Son of David," *Luke i. 32.* When our Blessed Saviour asked his disciples, "Whom do men say, that I the Son of Man am?" Peter answered, thou art Christ the Son of the living God," *Matth. xvi. 13, 16.* which our Saviour sustaining, confirmed the declaration of his apostle, that the titles, Son of God and Son of Man, were convertible terms, as though they represented him as differently related, yet they were both expressive of the same person. Accordingly Jesus himself being interrogated by the High Priest, whether he was the Son of God? acknowledged he was, yet affirmed he was also the Son of Man; for both were characters

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of the same person of Messiah, *Matth. xxvi. 63, 64.* St. Paul affirms Christ to be in the same person, made of the seed of David, and the Son of God, *Rom. i. 3, 4.* And St. John has the same vision, and gives the very same description of the Son of God, *Rev. ii. 18.* that he had received and given of the Son of Man, *Chap. i. 13—15. viz.* That his eyes were like unto a flame of fire, and his feet like fine brass, both which correspond exactly with the vision and prophetic description of the Saviour given by Daniel, *Chap. x. 5, 6.* and all of them evince the Son of God and the Son of Man to be the same person, and consequently that this person along with his divine, includes also a human nature.

The same person who is called the Son of God, is called Messiah, or Christ; which though the first denotes his person, and the second his office; yet these being indifferently predicated of the same person, shew that person to be the same. Thus in the second Psalm, the same person, who is called משיח, God's Messiah, or anointed, ver. 2. and who at ver. 6. is prophetically declared to be anointed king of Zion, is at ver. 7. called his Son, his begotten Son. Upon this and their subsequent revelations, the Jews understood the terms Son of God and Messiah as always descriptive of the same person. Thus Nathaniel is no sooner satisfied that Jesus was the promised Messiah, than he declares, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel," *John i. 49.* The High Priest adjured our Saviour to tell him, whether he was the Christ, the Son of God, when Jesus declares he was, confirming at once the identity of person to whom these characters were given and appropriating both to himself, *Matth. xxvi. 63, 64.* Instructed
by

by the national religion, and much confirmed in this truth by their divine master, the disciples of Christ uniformly applied these characters to the same person. Martha being interrogated by our Saviour of her belief in him, answered, "Lord " I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of " God, which should come into the world," *John xi. 27.* And the Twelve, when he asked them who they thought he was, immediately replied, " We believe and are sure, that thou art " that Christ, the Son of the living God," *John vi. 6.* therein expressing both the Jewish and the Christian faith, which held these titles to be but different names of the same person.

The Scriptures apply the name Son of God, to the same person who is called Jesus or the Saviour. Thus Mark intitles his Gospel, " The " book of the generation of Jesus Christ the Son " of God," *Mark i. 1.* St. John, when he wrote for the general instruction of the Christian world, concludes his Gospel by declaring, That " these " things are written that ye may believe that " Jesus Christ is the Son of God," *John xx. 31.* And in one of his Epistles, he says, " We have " seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son " to be the Saviour of the world," *1 John iv. 14.* And Paul represents the Thessalonians as waiting for God's Son from heaven, even Jesus who hath delivered us from the wrath to come, *1 Thes. i. 10.* By which they clearly intimate that the names Jesus and Son of God are characteristical of the self-same person.

This name Son of God is also applied to every office Christ performed, every blessing he hath procured, and every honour he is raised to in his complex person. Thus, was he made of a woman, and made under the law, it was the Son of God
who

who was so made, *Gal.* iv. 4. Was he at his entrance upon his ministry baptized with water, by John Baptist, and by his Father with the Holy Spirit; both joined in affirming it was the Son of God who was then baptized, *John* i. 34. *Matt.* iii. 17. Did he as our great prophet declare to us God and his will, it was the only begotten Son who declared him, *John* i. 18. Was he made a great high priest, as Son he was made an high priest, *Heb.* v. 5. Did God not spare him but deliver him up for us all; it was his Son he delivered up, *Rom.* viii. 31. Did he raise Jesus from the dead, it was his Son he raised up, *Acts* iii. 26. And did he glorify him whom the Jews delivered up, and denied in the presence of Pilate; it was his Son Jesus who was denied by man, but whom God glorified, ver. 13. Are we cleansed by his blood from all sin; it is the blood of Jesus Christ his Son that cleanseth us, *1 John* i. 7.

But what does all this infer? If the title, Son of God, is definitive of the same precise person, as the title Son of Man, Messiah or Christ, Jesus or the Saviour; if it is applied to all that Christ became, did, and suffered for our salvation; and do all these characters and offices express his complex person as God-man Mediator; then it follows by unavoidable consequence that the same complex person who is the Son of Man, Messiah, the Saviour, is the Son of God. The Prophets foretold these to be the same person: the Jews expected them to be the same. Neither Christ nor his apostles hinted the smallest difference or distinction betwixt them, which we may be sure they would have done, had any distinction existed. On the contrary, our Blessed Saviour, and every inspired writer of the New as well as of the Old Testament, with unanimous and uniform

form consent, apply these characters to the same person; and consequently teach us, that he became the begotten Son of God, when he was conceived and born as the Son of Man, and that his generation consisted in the union of the divine Logos with our human nature.

Nor to elude the force of this, or the other arguments from Scripture in support of this doctrine, can it with reason be said, that Christ having been the Son of God by the eternal generation of his divine person, and that divine person constituting the chief part of his complex person, continues to give a name to the whole. For, 1. we have no evidence, that his divine person was generated from eternity by the Father, or that he is the Son of God in that sense. We have already shewed that such an opinion is without all foundation in Scripture, and inconsistent with that co-eternal and co-essential existence which is ascribed to the divine Word, equally as to the other persons in the Godhead. To believe Christ then to be the Son of God in this sense, is to believe without evidence, either from revelation or reason; and therefore the objection is a mere *petitio principii*, a begging the question, as Logicians call it. 2. Every passage of Scripture that holds forth Christ as Son of God, holds him forth as such in his complex person; and every inspired writer that declares his generation, places it in the procreation of that person, by the incarnation of the divine Word. And we have shown, that in this, and no other possible sense, can the essential ideas of generation apply to him. To believe Christ then to be the Son of God by the eternal generation of his divine person, is to believe not only without proper evidence, but to believe contrary

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to the clearest evidence revelation or the nature of the thing can give us. 3. We have every reason to believe, that these declarations of Scripture which represent Christ to be the Son of God, as he is God-man, were meant by God, and should be understood by us, in their most obvious meaning. The God of truth and grace uniformly reveals his Son Messiah as Saviour of the world. Christ when he appeared, and conversed bodily with mankind, affirmed himself in that visible personality, to be the Son of God. All his apostles affirm the same; and ascribe every thing he did, every thing he suffered, every blessing of salvation he purchased, to him as Son of God. In his name, as Son of God our Saviour, all mankind, the most simple and illiterate, as well as the most judicious and learned, are required, as they would obtain his salvation, to believe. Is there any truth then, that we may presume is more clearly revealed, and when revealed, is more to be understood in its plain and obvious meaning, than this most important one? surely not. Had Christ been the Son of God in the sense supposed, it would have been clearly and universally revealed; and the evidence of his being so, as God-man, would have been so slender, as would easily have been accounted for, upon the principle suggested. But when there is no convincing evidence, that he is the Son of God, as he is God only, but the fullest evidence the whole tenor of divine revelation can give, that he is the Son of God, as he is God-man, we must necessarily found his Sonship in that character, and in that alone: for never can we suppose, that God would hold forth Christ, as his Son, in one respect, when he is his Son in another. Never can we believe that
Christ

Christ would declare himself the Son of God, when he appeared as a man ; or would have permitted his apostles to have considered him themselves, and represented him to the world, as Son of God in his complex, if he were so only in his divine person.

5. What farther confirms the explication of our Saviour's Sonship we have given is, that the first person of the Trinity is seldom called the Father, or the second the Son before our Saviour's incarnation ; and when they are so called, it is always with a view to it : but after his incarnation, they are commonly distinguished by these new relations, and by the characters expressing them.

A plurality of personal subsistences in the one divine Essence is intimated in the revelations of God to mankind from the first ages. The common name by which these divine subsistences in the Godhead were expressed, was *אלהים* Elohim, which signifies the *Adorable Ones*, Gen. i. 26. These persons subsisting in the divine Essence were all called by the name *יהוה* Jehovah, which signifies the eternal self-existent Being, and implies that each of these personal subsistences are as necessarily-existent, and eternal, as the divine Essence in which they all exist. Thus we are told, that " Jehovah " rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah, brimstone and fire from Jehovah out of heaven," Gen. xix. 24. which has commonly been understood as descriptive of the two first divine persons. Many intimations we have of these persons, and various names defining them, under the Old Testament, which it belongs not to this design particularly to enumerate. But what we observe as relating to our present argument is, that among all

all these indications of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, there is not the smallest hint given during the space of three thousand years from the creation downwards, that one of them was a Father and another a Son. When the time of the incarnation and appearance of the second of these divine persons began to approach, various prophecies were given of him, more full and particular than the former ones, to prepare the Jews and the world for giving the glorious Redeemer and his religion a proper reception. Then were the relative characters of Father and Son first heard of in the divine revelations; and those divine persons who had formerly been designed by the common names, Elohim, Jehovah, Adonai, &c. begin now to be distinguished by the appellations of Father and Son. Yet all these were given in view of that future incarnation of the divine Word. Accordingly we have showed that in the second and eighty-ninth Psalms, these characters are declared, but declared not as then actually existing, but which should take place only at Messiah's appearance. Agur, if his question "What is his name, or what is his Son's name?" *Prov.* xxx. 4. relates at all to this subject, puts it in terms that do not determine whether such relation then subsisted or should take place afterwards; and so agreeably to all the other prophetic declarations of Christ's Sonship under the Old Testament must be understood in the last of these senses. Nebuchadnezzar, instructed it is likely by some of the Jews then dwelling at Babylon, that the Son of God, who should be God in human nature, was to be the Saviour of the world, cried out on seeing the three men whom he had cast into the furnace walking untouched amidst

amidst the devouring flames, and accompanied by a person more glorious, though also in human form, "Did not we cast three men into the fire? and lo, I see four men walking in the midst of the fire, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God," *Dan. iii. 25.* which intimates that the Babylonish king and his instructors believed the person must be the man, though more than man, who was foretold and expected as the Son of God. In like manner, St. John, when he is proving Christ's divinity and existence before his incarnation, *John i. 1, 2.* in opposition to Ebion and Cerinthus, as Eusebius and Irenæus inform us; and when he represents him in his divine character alone, *1 John v. 7.* never calls him the Son, though that would more clearly have represented him as a distinct person, but uniformly, the Logos, or God the Word. But having proceeded to show that the "Word was made flesh," ver. 14, he not only designates him then the begotten of the Father, but most commonly designs him ever afterwards by the same appellation. Thus also St. Paul, when he speaks of Christ's incarnation, represents him not as the Son of God manifested in the flesh, but as "God manifested in the flesh," *1 Tim. iii. 16.* But when he preached him as actually incarnated, he then preached him as "Christ the Son of God," *Acts ix. 20.* And in general we may observe, that from the time of our Saviour's birth through every part of the New Testament, the relative names of Father and Son are the common terms by which the two first persons in the Godhead are usually denominated. But what does all this naturally teach us? It must teach us to believe that these new relations between these divine persons, commenced from the

the time the new names expressing these new characters and relations commenced, and the great event plainly producing them, is affirmed to be accomplished. Since the first person is seldom called the Father, or the second the Son, before Christ's incarnation; since they are commonly so called, ever after that event; and, whether before or after, are so called, with a manifest prospect or reference to it; and since the God of truth never gives names to beings but what are expressive of their true nature and characters, and are meant to give us just notions of the persons they describe, we have hence an additional proof of the truth we are establishing, even that the second person of the Godhead, incarnate, and only when incarnate, is the Son of God.

6. This great truth will be still farther evident, when we consider that Christ as Son, is commonly represented in Scripture as somehow inferior and subordinate to the Father; and that both in his personal and official character; and not only in his state of humiliation upon earth, but also of his highest exaltation in heaven. Indeed, as the complex person of the Son includes a divine subsistence which is of the same divine essence with the Father; we find the Father and the Son sometimes affirmed to be equal and to be one. Thus says Christ, "I and my Father are one," *John* x. 30. And being as to their divine essence numerically one, he adds, "the Father is in me and I in him," ver. 38. Upon the same principle he says to Thomas, "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also, and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him." And to Philip, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. The words that I speak, I speak not of myself, but

“ the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doth the
 “ works: believe me, that I am in the Father,
 “ and the Father in me, *John* xiv. 7, 10, 11.
 These expressions though applied to the Son, who
 is the Word made flesh, yet apply to him as the
 Word only; for in that respect only is he another
 personal subsistence in the same essence with the
 Father, and so the essence of either can be justly
 ascribed to each other.

But though the Son, considered as God the
 Word, is in essence one, and in every essential
 perfection equal with the Father; yet, considered
 as Son of God, he is commonly represented in
 Scripture in a character, personal as well as offi-
 cial; that is, in some respect dependent upon
 and subordinate to the Father. In this view,
 Christ declares of himself at large; “ Verily,
 “ verily, I say unto you, the Son can do no-
 “ thing of himself, but what he seeth the Father
 “ do; for whatsoever things he doth, these also
 “ doth the Son likewise: for the Father loveth
 “ the Son, and sheweth him all things that him-
 “ self doth, and he will shew him greater works
 “ than these, that ye may marvel; for as the Fa-
 “ ther raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them,
 “ even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.
 “ For the Father judgeth no man, but hath
 “ committed all judgment unto the Son, that all
 “ men should honour the Son even as they ho-
 “ nour the Father; he that honoureth not the
 “ Son, honoureth not the Father which hath
 “ sent him. For as the Father hath life in him-
 “ self, so hath he given to the Son to have life
 “ in himself; and hath given him authority to
 “ execute judgment also, because he is the Son
 “ of Man. I can of mine own self do nothing;
 “ as I hear I judge, and my judgment is just,
 E “ because

“because I seek not mine own will, but the will
 “of the Father which hath sent me,” *John v.*
 19—30. When the incarnate Word was about
 to leave this world and ascend to heaven, he says,
 “I go unto my Father, for my Father is greater
 “than I;” and “as the Father gave me com-
 “mandment, so I do,” *John xiv.* 28, 31.
 Many of these declarations relate to the person
 of the Son of God, as others of them plainly
 respect his offices. Several of them are too high
 to apply merely to any created nature; and all of
 them are evidently too low, to describe that co-
 essential and co-equal divinity, which all Scripture
 ascribes alike to the divine Word, as to the Fa-
 ther. But if they are too low to be applied to
 him as God, they must be applied to him either
 as he is man only, or as God-man. If we apply
 them to him as man, they plainly prove that the
 Son of God, as Son, possesses a human nature;
 and so fall in with our third general evidence of
 this truth. But as the works of raising the dead
 and judging the world, are there ascribed to him,
 and the same worship is to be paid to him as to
 his divine Father, these descriptions must include
 also his divinity; and thus representing him as
 God-man, represent him in a character somewhat
 inferior and subject to his Father. In this
 sense we find God called by the Apostles, “the
 “God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,”
Ephes. i. 3. *1 Pet. i.* 3. which expresses Christ’s
 subordination to the Father, not indeed as to his
 divinity, but in his filial person and character as
 the divine Word made flesh. And St. Paul as-
 sures us, that in the future world the Son him-
 self shall be subject unto him that put all things
 under him, *1 Cor. xv.* 28. But how and when
 did the Most High God thus humble himself,

to become in some respect subordinate to pure divinity? Of this the Apostle gives us the fullest information; it is not by a natural inferiority of his Godhead; it is not by a real degradation of his divine person from its original Deity, perfection or blessedness; it is not from a subjection of divinity to divinity, much less from a reduction of divinity to an inferior nature. All these are incompatible with divinity, and so are naturally impossible; but it is by his assuming a finite nature into union with his divine person. It is by God's becoming God-man, and in that person the Son of God and the Son of Man; and submitting to all those humiliating offices that were necessary to reunite them into eternal friendship. "For being in the form of God, he
 "thought it not robbery to be equal with God,
 "but made himself of no reputation, and took
 "upon him the form of a servant; and being
 "found in fashion as a man, he humbled him-
 "self and became obedient unto death, even the
 "death of the cross, wherefore God also hath
 "highly exalted him, and given him a name which
 "is above every name; that at the name of Jesus
 "every knee should bow, of things in heaven,
 "and things in earth, and things under the
 "earth, and that every tongue should confess that
 "Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the
 "Father," *Phil.* ii. 6—11. Thus the soul of man being personally united with an animal body, makes him a little lower than the angels, *Psal.* viii. 5. but when our body is spiritualized, we shall be *ἰσάγγελοι* equal, or like to them, *Luke* xx. 35. The same reason is assigned for the voluntary humiliation of the Son in Scripture, *Heb.* ii. 9. But if Christ as Son of God is thus represented in a character inferior to the Father, and

yet is affirmed as God to be equal, and one with him; what is the inference we must necessarily draw from it? It can be no other than this, that his character as Son of God, is different from, and in some respect inferior to his character as God; that this inferiority must result from his having assumed an inferior nature into union with his divine person, making him the Son of God; or that this subordination of his complex person is the subordination of a Son to his Father, though in his divine person he is equal to him; and so in either view it irrefragably proves, that Christ as God-man is the Son of God.

7. What farther proves that Christ is the Son of God in his complex person, is, that this explication of our Saviour's Sonship, and this only, agrees with all the different characters ascribed in Scripture to the Son of God, and reconciles all the Scriptures that have been urged in evidence of the other explications; and so has the universal voice of revelation joining in proof of it.

Nothing is more certain, than that the revelations of the God of truth must be consistent with themselves, and that they will always be found so, when rightly understood. These Scriptures ascribe to the Son of God different natures and characters; and in that sense, and in that only, can Christ be the Son of God, in which all these Scriptures will fairly apply to him. When we hear the sacred Scriptures prophesying of the same person, that he is to be the begotten Son of God, *Psal. ii. 7.* and to be the Son of Man, *Dan. vii. 13.* When we hear him at his birth affirmed to be at once the Son of the Highest, and the descendant of the house of David, *Luke i. 31.* When we hear him through his whole ministry calling himself indiscriminately the Son
of

of God, and the Son of Man; and at his crucifixion bidding his mother Mary behold her Son, *John* xix. 21. and commending his Spirit into the hands of God as his Father, *Luke* xxiii. 46. When we find him in one place affirming, "I and my Father are one," *John* x. 30. in another, "My Father is greater than I," *John* xiv. 28. When on one occasion it is declared of him, that he knoweth all things, *John* xxi. 17. on another, that he knoweth not the time of the general judgment, *Mark* xiii. 32. At one time that he can do all things, *Phil.* iii. 21. at another, that of himself he can do nothing; but what he seeth the Father do, that doth the Son likewise, *John* v. 30. When we see him in one place called God over all and blessed for ever, *Rom.* ix. 5. in another, affirmed to be subject to his Father, *1 Cor.* xv. 28. When, as the ground of all these different attributions, all Scripture declares him to be true God, *1 John* vi. 20. and so possessing all the perfections of God; and true man, having the full nature, properties, and actions of man ascribed to him, as we have showed at large in the first chapter. Nay, when we are expressly informed that this Son of God is Immanuel, *Matt.* i. 23. the Word made flesh. *John* i. 14. God manifested in the flesh, *1 Tim.* iii. 16. and so uniting both these natures in one person, has all the properties of each uniformly ascribed to him. When, I say, we consider all these different natures and characters, divine and human, that through the whole book of God are ascribed to his Son; what are we, as sensible men, what are we, as judicious Christians, from all this to conclude? Are we to believe our Blessed Saviour to be the Son of God, as he is God only, when upon equal evidence we are

assured he is also man? Or ought we to hold him to be Son of God; as he is man only, when we have the same undeniable evidence that he is also God? And are we to press these partial representations the Scriptures give of his complex person, in different views, to support either of these opposite opinions, as both parties have done, and make the Word of truth contradictory to itself? By no means; this is to put asunder what God in all his revelations hath clearly conjoined. The truth lies here not in the opposition, but in the conjunction of these characters. This is done by the explication we have given of our Saviour's Sonship; and can be done upon no other supposeable and scriptural scheme.

All Scripture affirms the Son, as God, to have the same supreme divinity as the other persons in the Godhead. The Athanasians, Schoolmen and Semiarrians give him however only a generated and derived divinity, and the Arians and Socinians no divinity at all. But the explication of his Sonship we have here given, preserves and confirms his supreme Deity, yet in perfect consistence with his proper Sonship. All Scripture that exhibits Christ as Son of God, exhibits him in that character as God and man, and ascribes to him natures, characters and offices, correspondent to this complex person. These are totally irreconcilable, if we hold him to be Son of God as he is God only, or as he is man only; but are perfectly consistent, if he is the Son of God as he is both. By this explication as these different theories, so far as they are just, are united; so all the passages of Scripture, that give any proof of them, are fairly reconciled; and whereas when separated, they yielded but a faint evidence of either side of the subject, and in doing

doing so, stood in direct opposition to each other; they now give a full and consistent proof of the general connected subject they were meant to describe, which to every Christian must be demonstration, that the connected view we have given of it, is the scriptural and just one.

Such is the manifold and convincing evidence we have that Christ Jesus in both his natures is the Son of God, and that he became so, when these natures were united in the generation and birth of the glorious Immanuel.

This generation and Sonship of our Blessed Saviour is the fundamental article of revealed religion, and so makes a capital part of every revelation of God to mankind. And as no truth is of greater importance, so none is supported by clearer or more abundant evidence. We have thought fit to exhibit this evidence in its proper variety and fulness, both because this was a chief part of our design, and the foundation of the subsequent parts of it; and especially because this scriptural and compleat view of our Saviour's Sonship hath long been lost amidst those partial and imperfect, and often most unnatural as well as unscriptural views of it, which have been exhibited to the world and generally received by it. This, with superficial enquirers, may seem a new explication of our Saviour's Sonship, and a great innovation in the Christian system. But in reality, it is only the ancient, and the true one revived, and established by a more regular and compleat evidence than hath been hitherto exhibited. And though it has not the recommendation of the general belief, it has what to every reasonable man and judicious Christian will be a much higher recommendation; it has the fullest and clearest testimony of Scripture. It

has also the general belief of the Church in its primitive and purest state. The Jewish teachers, we have seen, predicted the Son of God in this complex personality. The ancient Jewish church believed and expected him in this character. They could not indeed have such a distinct knowledge that the second person in the God-head was to be personally united with human nature; but they believed that the Son of God was to be a man, having the divinity dwelling in him in an extraordinary manner. Thus when he affirmed that God was his Father, the Jews sought to kill him, as plainly making himself equal with God, *John* v. 18. And when he acknowledged himself the Son of God before the council, the high-priest and the whole council declared him guilty of blasphemy, by which they shewed, that according to the faith of the Jews, the Messiah, or Son of God, was to be a man with supreme divinity dwelling within him. Of the many Rabbi's Origen consulted on this head, he assures us, not one of them would admit the Logos alone to be the Son of God. *Orig. contr. Celsum. Lib. II.* And accordingly Rabbi Raschi, and other modern Jews, describe Messiah as having the divine Word, *בְּרַחֲמֵי* in the middle of him.

The primitive Christian and apostolic church considered the Son of God in the same light; as in this light Christ and his apostles did uniformly represent it. The succeeding ages gradually departed from this just notion of our Saviour's Sonship; and by that departure have given occasion to more general and lasting errors as to this article, than as to any other in the whole system of Christianity. More distinguished for piety and eloquence, than

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a critical study of the Scriptures; ignorant of or inattentive to the just theory of generation; and many of them converts from heathenism; in which the generation of their gods made a great part of their theology; the fathers injudiciously confounded the Son of God with the divine Word, and applied that generation which gives the Logos a personal co-existence only with human nature, to give existence to the eternal Logos himself. Hence they proceeded to represent the first person as *αρχη*, *αρχη*, *πρην*, *principium*, *auctor*, the principle, the efficient cause; the Father or producer of the second; held the second to be a Son derived from his Father, and dependent upon him for existence, and applied all those inferior characters to the Son, as God, which we have seen the Scriptures affirm of him only as he is God-man. This unhappily paved the way, first for Arianism, and then for Mahometism in the first ages; and this and the scholastic theory of the Trinity founded upon it, gave birth not only to modern Arianism, but to Socinianism itself: from the orthodox acknowledging a generated, Arius and his followers proceeded to give him only a created Deity, though created from eternity; and the Socinians make him only a creature of time.

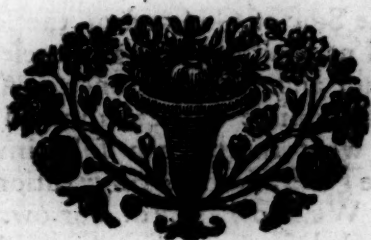
Yet neither were the private writings of the fathers, nor the public decrees of their councils, unanimous upon this subject. Several of the fathers gave Christ an existence, as the divine eternal Logos, previous to his more distinct generation as the Son. The Nicene Creed rested his existence as Son, on his eternal generation by the Father; yet the symbol ascribed to Athanasius affirms him, as God, to be in all respects co-equal and co-eternal with

the Father; and that his Sonship commenced some-how before the world. And the most general Creed, commonly called Apostolic, taken in its plain connection and meaning, represents this article in the precise light in which we have here placed it, and in which Christ and his apostles first declared it. For having affirmed Jesus Christ to be God's only Son, it represents this Son, as conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, and submitting to all those sufferings, and exalted to those rewards, which all along characterize this Son of God, as uniting humanity with divinity in the constitution of his person. But it is not the opinions of fallible men, but the revelations of the God of truth that direct and establish the faith of a Christian, upon this important subject. If it have this evidence, it needs no other: if it wants this, none else can support it. By not attending to this unerring rule, every error on this and the other articles of religion have in every period crept into the church; and it is only by recurring to it, that these errors can be corrected, and genuine Christianity restored. By this certain and effectual method, were many erroneous principles in doctrine and practice detected, and discarded at the late happy Reformation; and by the same means only, can this fundamental article of our faith be rescued from the imperfect or mistaken notions, which both the later Greek and Latin churches have held of it, and recovered to that just and natural sense in which the Scriptures have placed it. The books of Philo, and the Targumists; the writings of the Christian fathers, and the decrees of the councils, may show what were their sentiments upon this subject, and in what light they explained

plained the Scriptures relating to it. But these are oftentimes different from Scripture, different from each other, and sometimes from themselves; so that the orthodox and the heretics have both claimed them as on their side. The inspired writings alone are the foundation and standard of revealed theology, as much superior in authority to every human composition, as the infallible God is to fallible men, and to which every opinion of mankind must ever be subject. By this unerring rule, and not by the application of a part, but of the whole of it, we have endeavoured to investigate and ascertain the proper ground of our Saviour's Sonship. The explication we have given of this article, as it has the countenance and support of every part of revelation, so it not a little recommends itself to our regards from its perfect consistency with our Saviour's supreme divinity, and its natural tendency to establish that great truth, upon its proper foundation, and to banish those erroneous and dangerous opinions, as to our Saviour's person, with which the Christian church hath been long pestered, and which have originated chiefly from a misunderstanding of his Sonship. The Athanasians, the schoolmen, and their followers, holding him God, and the Son of God, by eternal generation, degraded their Saviour from a necessarily-existent to a generated and dependent Deity. The Arians, holding him Son of God, only as he is a glorious and god-like spirit, created by God before all worlds; and the Socinians, who hold him but a man, raised to god-like power and glory, have given up his real divinity altogether, and every just ground of his being the begotten Son of God; and all of them have most certainly erred in limiting his Sonship to one of his natures, when all Scripture and ever

rational idea of generation, join in assuring us it includes both. This explication of it restores this fundamental article of our faith, to that just light, in which God, and the Son of God, the prophets and apostles revealed it, and the church received it: and it is attended with none of the absurdities that attend these unnatural and imperfect expositions of it which latter ages have fallen into, while it has every advantage with which any of them are attended. This holds him to be the Son of God, as he is God, yet without a generated or created, but necessarily-existent divinity, as all true divinity must necessarily be, and the Son of God too as he is man, yet as he is neither only, but both united by a proper generation, and co-existing in one complex person. This neither infringes his supreme Deity, by making him a generated God on the one hand, nor weakens the argument from his being the begotten Son of God, that he must be truly God, but greatly strengthens both, while his divinity is not derived or dependent, but necessarily-existent and eternal, as the divine essence in general, and the other personal subsistences identified with that essence, however distinguishable from each other, must necessarily be. Nor does it exalt a mere creature to the characters and honours of its divine Creator; but unites the divine co-essential, necessarily-existent and eternal Word, by the power of God, with a human nature, constituting the complex person of Immanuel; who is both God and man in one person; and who in this compound person, begotten or constituted by his divine Father, and born of his Virgin Mother, is in all propriety of language, and with the full declaration of Scripture, the Son of both. And without vanity,

nity, I will say, had this natural and scriptural view of our Saviour's Sonship been properly adhered to, Arianism and Socinianism would either never have been broached, or, like the other heresies, would soon have been effectually confuted and banished, as the evidence of Scripture would be so full and strong in support of his supreme Deity; and yet his supreme divinity be so consistent with his Sonship, that those unnatural, antisciptural doctrines would by every judicious Christian be discarded; or if any adhered to them, they must plainly renounce every regard to divine revelation, by every part of which they are most clearly contradicted.



C H A P. IV.

*Of the Generation of the Son of God, and
the Constitution of his Person.*

HAVING investigated the natures which exist in our Saviour's person, shewed that this person is the Son, the begotten Son of God, and proved that he possesses this character as he is God-man; we go on to explain more particularly his wonderful generation, and the constitution of his complex person thereby produced. This will illustrate and confirm the account of his Sonship we have given, and delineate the person of that glorious Immanuel, on whose person and mediation are built all our hopes of everlasting happiness. It will also show us how far, and only how far the analogy holds between the generation of the Son of God and of the sons of men, and guard us against pushing the resemblance beyond its just and proper bounds. A full discussion of this sublime subject is indeed impracticable: for what mortal can fully investigate and declare the generation and constitution of this Son of God! We know little of our own nature, we know much less of the divine, and how can we know perfectly that glorious personage that contains both?

But though an adequate comprehension of this subject is impossible, such a knowledge of it is attainable as is necessary for our salvation: and for this our gracious God hath sufficiently provided by the revelations he hath given us. In
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compliance therefore with the design of these revelations, we shall endeavour shortly to delineate this subject, by shewing, 1. What Christ was before his generation, and what he must farther be, to become the begotten Son of God. 2. Give an account from Scripture of his actual generation according to these principles, and 3. Describe the constitution of his person as God-man, the Son of God.

I. The generation of the sons of men, to which that of the Son of God is represented as analogous, consists in the connexion of the pre-existent human principle of the Father with the additional substance, necessary to the completion of its person, derived from the mother. Similar must be the generation of the Son of God. From his two different natures united in one person, he is at once the Son of God and the Son of man; and therefore his generation must consist in the union or constitution of these natures into one person. The constituents of this complex person are the divine Logos and a perfect human nature: both these we have proved to exist in our Saviour's person, and therefore these must have been personally united in the generation of it. The first and chief constituent of our Saviour's complex person is his divine subsistence, called in Scripture the Logos or Word of God. *Λογος* in the Greek language signifies both reason and speech: applied by the inspired writers to the divine person of Christ, it signifies something analogous, though greatly superior to these. In the first sense, it signifies that this divine person is an intelligent personal subsistence in the divine essence, as essential to the Deity, as reason is to a rational nature, and as inseparable from the other persons in that essence, as reason is from mind or spirit.

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spirit. In the second sense it implies, that by him were the divine wisdom and power in a special manner exerted in the creation of the world, and the will of God revealed in after ages to his reasonable creatures. The first relates more to his personal, the second more to his oeconomic character. Yet none of them are meant to represent him, as a mere quality or virtue of the Deity; but as a divine personal subsistence possessing every perfection intellectual and active, and exerting them in conjunction with the other persons in the Godhead. By this divine Word the Jewish revelations affirm all things to have been created, *Psa.* xxxiii. 60. And from these the Jewish and Chaldean Paraphrasts held the מַמְרָא, Memra, and the Greek writers the Λόγος, Logos, to be that divine agent by whom all things were made. By this term, so long and so generally understood, St. John denominates this divine person; and confirms the general belief, by affirming that "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made," *John* i. 13. And farther to show us that he is neither the general Deity under a different name, nor a mere power of that Deity, but a personal subsistence in the tri-une Godhead, he assures us, that "there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one," 1 *John* v. 7. This second person of the Trinity is the original principle and grand constituent of the Son of God. Like the original principle in human generation, this divine subsistence had co-existed with the first person, by the same necessity of nature as the first, distinguished from him as another personal subsistence, yet pos-

nessing with him the same divine essence. Superior to the originating principle in human generation, this divine principle was not only of the same specific, but of the same numerical essence with the Father; and was equally a complete personal subsistence in that essence, and possessed equally every perfection the other persons do possess. This was the original character of him who afterwards appeared as the Son of God, and this is the just foundation of all those divine names, perfections, and honours, that we have showed the Scripture uniformly ascribes to him, equally and in common with the other persons in the Godhead. In this divine essence he had co-existed with the Father, and the consubstantial spirit from eternal ages, possessed of the same divine perfections and glory, and happiness. He had been co-partner with him in all the counsels of his wisdom, with regard to the world, and man, before the foundation of the world, *Ephes. i. 3, 4. 1 Peter i. 20.* He had been a co-essential and conjunct agent with him in the creation of all things, for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist, *Col. i. 16, 17.* Possessed of the divine nature and all its perfections, he needed no other nature, nor any additional perfection to make his character more perfect. Having all the fulness of God, he needed nothing more to complete his happiness; and united with his Father in the same divine essence, he could have no relation to him nearer or more endearing. But though he could have no closer connexion with God, he might have a closer connexion with his creatures;

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tures ; and though by assuming an additional nature, his divine nature could neither be made more perfect nor more happy ; yet superior honour and happiness might be derived to the creatures he hath made. This the divine wisdom and goodness before all worlds had ordained. With the co-essential Logos, were all things decreed, and by him, as the Almighty Word, were the beings decreed to be created. As by him in a special manner all things were decreed and created, so he was to be the grand medium, through whom the subsequent blessings of the divine goodness and grace were to be conveyed to his creation. He had been essentially connected with God, and was God from all eternity ; but the divine counsels had determined that this consubstantial Word should by a personal union with a created nature, effected by a divine generation, become God-man and the Son of God, the bond of union between pure Deity and his created intelligent children, and the glorious mediator through whom the divine government should be administered and the blessings of his goodness be dispensed to his creatures. This must be done by the assumption of another nature into personal union with the divine Logos, and the assumption of it in such a way as corresponds to the general law of generation among human beings, and would constitute the complex person produced, the begotten and proper Son of God. The nature to be assumed was the human, that abridgment of creation, and the species of being for whose benefit the generation of Messiah's person was in a special manner decreed and effected. This human nature consists of a finite created spirit, called the soul, and a material human frame, called the body ; the one connecting us with the spiritual.

ritual system, the other with the material ; yet the two compounded making us complex beings distinguished from both. Both of these must the Son of God our Saviour assume, for his brethren he came to redeem possessed both, and both he must assume in a way analogous to that by which his human brethren received them. His soul, like all finite spirits, must be created from nothing by the power of God. Being to connect personally with the divine word, on the one hand, and with the human body on the other, it must be created for union with both. The last constitutes it a soul truly human ; but the first gives it a distinction and superiority to the highest created intelligences. A soul formed for personal union with the all-perfect Word, must also be the most perfect its finite nature and its state can admit. None but a most exalted spirit could receive the extraordinary communications, and bear the immediate impressions of indwelling Deity, nor sustain that overpowering blaze of divine glory, at a distance from which angels must cover their faces with their wings ; but into the splendors of which the Son of God was to be for ever advanced.

With this glorious human soul, the Son of God must also have a human body, to give him a special relation to man, the species of being he was to redeem and exalt, and whose compleat nature he was especially to assume ; “ for in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren,” *Heb. ii. 17.* This human body also must be formed by the divine power ; for he could have no human father who was to be the begotten Son of God. It was, however, to be formed by God, of the substance of a woman, that he who was to be our Redeemer might be our near kinsman. And finally, in the formation.

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formation of his body and creation of his soul, the divine Word must be united to them by the Father in one person, and he be born of his mother so as to make the complex person produced, the Son at once of God and of man. Such was Christ in his original character as God, and thus must he become God-man, by a divine generation uniting him with human nature, that he might be the Son of God. We proceed, therefore,

II. To shew, that exactly in this manner was our Saviour's complex person constituted, and his generation as the Son of God effected; "for the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as the only begotten of the Father," *John i. 14.* We have formerly proved, that in the person of Christ, there are a divine subsistence, a created soul, and a human body, with all the properties belonging to each. These we are now to shew were at his incarnation united in one complex person, and united in such a manner as answers to every proper idea of generation, and justly constitutes that person, the begotten Son of God. The divine wisdom had ordained, and his revelations foretold, that he who was to be the Son of God should be born of a virgin, *Isaiah vii. 14.* From his regards to faithful Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, God had promised that his Son, our Saviour, should be of their seed, *Gen. xii. 3.* The tribe of Judah and family of David, that were raised to royal dominion over all the tribes and families of Israel, were to give birth to that personage who was to be the Head and Lord of the church and world. And of one of the last descendants of that royal family was Messiah to be born, in whom the temporal and

and typical kingdom of David was ordained to determine, and the noble and spiritual empire of Christ was to appear that should extend over the whole creation of being, and endure for ever. The person whom God had decreed to this peculiar honour, and in whom all these characters united, was the Virgin Mary, distinguished by the royalty and worth of her ancestors, more distinguished by her own piety and virtue, the noblest of all distinctions, and now to be distinguished above all her sex, by giving birth to the Son of God and Saviour of the world. Of the substance of this blessed person was our Saviour's human body to be formed; in her, by the union of God's co-essential Word with a proper human nature, was that complex person to be generated, and by her was he to be conceived and born, who was to be the Son of God.

This was to be the most divine and the most wonderful of all God's works. The creator and creature; the second person of the Godhead, a created soul and human body, are now to be conjoined in one person. Like all the other works of God, this is to be effected by the conjunct agency of the co-essential and undivided Trinity: yet, agreeably to that general œconomy which we find takes place among the sacred Three, in their immense design of external operation, it is to originate from, and to be effected chiefly by the first person, who from his peculiar and paternal agency in this incarnation of the divine Word, was to have the character of the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and this complex person produced to have the correlative character of God's begotten Son. Thus the Scriptures assure us, that God prepared the human body of his Son, *Heb. x. 5.* They also inform us, that he prepared

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prepared this body by the immediate agency of his Holy Spirit; for says the Angel to the Blessed Virgin, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee," *Luke i. 35.* and he declares to Joseph, that "that which was conceived in her was of the "Holy Ghost," *Matth. i. 20.* This does not imply that the substance of our Saviour's body was derived from the essence of the Holy Spirit, for the one was spiritual, the other was to be material; the one was divine, the other must be human. Nor does it signify that of any other substance was this body first formed, and then infused by the Divine Spirit into the Blessed Virgin; for the body of our Saviour is expressly affirmed to have been made of a woman, *Gal. iv. 4.* But the natural meaning of it is, that God formed the body of his Son of the substance and in the womb of the Virgin, by the Holy Ghost.

This omnipotent agent takes of the substance of the Blessed Virgin what was necessary and proper for the rudiments of our Saviour's body, and in supplement to the want of an animalcular principle, organizes it into the embryo of a human body, fit for the union and inhabitation of his human soul, and also of the divine Logos that was personally connected with it. While God by his Spirit thus forms the body of Christ of the substance of the Virgin, he also creates that holy soul which we have showed the Son of God does also possess; and which, as it holds a sort of intermediate nature and rank between the divine Logos and his human body, we may well suppose makes the proper medium and connecting bond between the one and the other. This glorious Spirit was created by the special power of God the Father, one of whose characters is, that he is the *Father of Spirits, Heb.*

xii. 9. and who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. And it was created of the noblest nature and powers suited to its exalted character, and qualified for union and intercourse both with the divine Word and with its human body, with both of which it was personally connected. In the creation of this human nature and the personal union of it with the divine, in the Virgin's womb, consisted the generation of the Son of God. Yet this union was not between the divine general essence and human nature, for in this case the whole Trinity would have been incarnate, but between this human nature and the second person, the Logos, on which account he alone was made flesh, *John* i. 14. Nor was it between the divine Logos and the general substance of the Blessed Virgin, for in that case she would have been deified. But it was between the divine Logos and the human embryo formed of her by the Holy Spirit and animated with its human soul, by which means, though the Blessed Mother had the high honour of conceiving the Son of God, her Son alone had the infinitely higher honour of uniting Deity and humanity in his glorious person. This union, strictly speaking, was not performed so much by a communication of the divine to the human, as by the accession of the human to the divine nature. Thus as in human generation, the paternal principle is the original and originating, and the maternal substance the accessory part, so much more was this the case in this divine generation. The divine nature, infinite and immoveable, was not infused into the human, but the human nature was assumed into personal co-existence with the divine. The Logos was not separated from the divine essence, or from the other persons, but was
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made flesh by the assumption of human nature into union with himself. Nor were this human soul and body first created and thereafter united to his divine person. Their creation and union were perfectly simultaneous. They were united with his Deity in their creation, and created in their union to it; so that from the first moment of their existence, they existed in personal union with the divine Word. And as in human generation the child is procreated by the union of the paternal principle with the accessory substance derived from the mother, and this is effected by the concurrence of the father, of the living principle and of the mother, so by all these ways was this supernatural generation of Messiah effected. The divine Logos, co-equal and co-essential with his Father, was united with human nature in the Virgin's womb. The union, as has been said, was effected primarily by the agency of the Father, who by his almighty power created Christ's human soul, and by his divine Spirit organized his human body, and formed both for union with his divine Word. It was effected also by the co-operation of the divine Logos himself, whose will and power were the same with his Father, and were exerted to the same effect; for "as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same," *Heb. ii. 14.* And he "who was in the form of God, did now take upon himself the fashion of man," *Phil. ii. 6—8.* The Virgin Mother was passive in this supernatural generation; yet she furnished the substance of which our Saviour's body was at first organized, and after his conception, she afforded nourishment to his body during her course of pregnancy, and at last brought him forth

forth into the world. Thus was she the Mother, not of God, as many both of the ancients and moderns have inaccurately called her; nor the mother of a mere man, as others erroneously held, but the Mother of the Son of God. Christ, as God, can neither have father or mother; but in his complex character, as God-man, he had both. God was his Father, the Virgin Mary his Mother, and he the Son of God and the Son of Man; "The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." *John i. 14.* "For when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman," *Gal. iv. 4.* Such was the generation of the Son of God, and such the natural and scriptural ground of it, analogous, in every necessary instance, to human generation, though greatly superior to it; and what constitutes Christ, as all Scripture defines him, God's only begotten and proper Son.

III. Let us consider more particularly the constitution of his complex person, that our knowledge of him may be farther enlarged.

This Son of God and Man unites the natures of both, and unites these natures in one complex person. Before his incarnation he was God, or the second personal subsistence in the divine essence, now he becomes God-man, the divine Word made flesh. This made no real change in his divinity, for divinity can never change. The real change was made wholly on his humanity, even from non-existence into existence, and an existence of all others the most honourable, a co-existence in one person with its divine creator. The change on his divinity was not real but relative. From existing only in one essence with the other persons in the godhead, and being a purely

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divine

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divine person, he, by assuming our nature into personal union with his divinity, of a simple, became a complex person, of God, he became God-man. In this person he possesses a truly divine nature as the Word; and a true and compleat human nature in a reasonable soul and human body, which he assumed into union with his pre-existent divinity. These two natures are not united by mere apposition, as two material bodies are joined in contiguity; nor by mere harmony of thought or affection, as congenial minds are said to be one; nor by mere inhabitation of the divine nature, by its gracious influence, in the human nature, as God dwells in and operates on the minds of good men. It is an union closer and more intimate; and of which neither nor all of these are the foundation; but are rather the effects. It is an union truly personal, an union by which the human exists in one complex person with the divine nature. This, as we formerly shewed Chap I. is evident from the ascription of both natures, by the inspired writers, to the same person of Christ; the ascription of perfections and actions divine and human to the same person; and even the reciprocation of these characters; those things being ascribed to the divine, which belong strictly to the human, and those things being ascribed to the human, which properly belong to the divine nature, but through the conjunction of these natures in one person are applicable to the general Person, and applied in common language to that person as characterized from either of its natures. And this the general theory of human generation, which relates to complex persons, implies, and the accounts we have given from scripture of our Lords generation clearly demonstrates.

What

What is the mode of this union, or what the ties by which it is established and preserved, God has not revealed, as it was neither necessary, nor perhaps possible for man to know it. We know not the ties by which spirit and body are connected in our own persons, and how can we know the ties that unite in one person the divine and human natures of the Son of God? We know the natures and qualities of spirit and of body so far, as to know they are essentially different. We know they cannot be confounded without a mutual destruction of their very essences, but that they are capable of union and co-existence in one complex person, we have the highest evidence, for we feel it every moment in ourselves, and perceive it in the whole world of mankind around us. In like manner we know so much of the divine and human natures of Christ, as to be assured they are essentially and infinitely different, and that they can never be converted the one into the other. But that they are incapable of union, we have no reason to believe, but much the contrary. The Deity, in a more general way, contains the whole creation in his essence; and though he is not strictly the *anima mundi*, or connected with it in one great whole as our souls are with our bodies, as many of the heathens of old, and Spinoza and his followers of late have absurdly imagined; yet somewhat like our souls in our bodies, he constantly sustains and actuates the whole, for in him we live, move, and have our being. He dwells more intimately by his gracious presence, his spirit and influence in the minds of good beings, animating them with all the principles, and filling them with the joys of the divine life. What then should hinder the Almighty, if he pleases, to create an intelligent

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nature fit for more intimate union with himself, and to create it in that union, an union so close and intimate as may be justly called personal? Does he in fact connect angelic and animal natures without mixture or confusion in every human person; and can he not create a human nature, and assume it into union with himself, as close as what he hath established between inferior, yet essentially different natures? In truth there is nothing more inconceivable in the union of Deity and humanity in the person of the Son of God, which he hath expressly declared to us, than in the union of mind and body; an intelligent, immaterial, immortal mind, with unconscious, material, and mortal body, of which however the whole world of human beings are evidences. Nay as the Deity necessarily pervades all nature, and co-exists in a general way with every mind he hath made, and as there must be a greater affinity betwixt the great Eternal Spirit and a human spirit created by him, created for and created in personal existence with him, though infinitely distinct from him, than between a human soul and body that have no point of agreement that we know of, so the union of those natures in Christ's complex person, seems more easily conceivable, than that of those so opposite natures of which our own persons are evidently composed. Our nature, which he assumed to his divine person, is in itself a complex one; for our benefit chiefly did he assume it, and as we are of all beings the most concerned to believe it; so of all beings have we highest reason to believe it, as we have in the constitution of our own natures, the noblest resemblance of our Redeemer's person creation affords. This manifestation of God in human flesh is, as St. Paul ranks it, the first
and

and the greatest mystery of godliness, which angels desire to look into, but the most piercing intelligence cannot fully investigate. Yet the mystery lies not so much in the difficulty of uniting natures essentially different, mysterious as that is, as in the wisdom and moral fitness of such an extraordinary constitution in the œconomy of Divine Providence, the discussion of which belongs not so much to the formation of Messiah's person, as to the character he was to bear and the offices he was to perform.

The perfect knowledge of this subject exceeds the comprehension of our finite minds, yet we can easily perceive there is nothing in it impossible, nothing repugnant to the nature of things. And though we cannot penetrate the complete nature of this union, the ties by which it exists, and the laws of operation between the divine and human natures, yet by the light of revelation, and the general knowledge of this great subject it hath afforded us, we can clearly investigate what is necessary for us to know of it in this present state. As the council of Chalcedon convened to take cognizance of the *Nestorian* heresy declared, this union of these natures in our Saviour's person is constituted *ασυγχυτως*, without any confusion or commixture of these natures; *ἀσπένδως*, without transmutation or change of these natures into each other; *ἀδιακρίτως*, without division of these natures into two distinct persons, and *ἀχωριστως*, without all future separation of these natures, thus united in the person of the Son of God. These were the terms by which the ancient church guarded against the various errors which then sprung up as to the person of our Blessed Saviour. Being framed against these errors, they are all negative: yet they clearly enough indi-

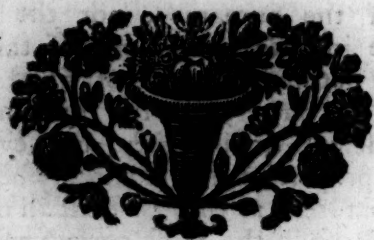
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cate the positive truth revelation teaches, and the Christian church is to believe with regard to this article of our holy faith. The divine and human natures are united in the person of Christ, without any confusion or mixture of the one with the other; for natures so essentially different, however they may be connected, can never be blended or confounded, but must each remain what it essentially is, and retain all the qualities that essentially belong to it. They are united without conversion or transmutation into each other; for it is impossible that the infinite and divine nature can be changed into a finite and human, and as impossible that a finite and human can be transubstantiated into an infinite and divine nature. But though the natures are two, the person is but one; for whenever two natures unite in one personal subsistence, they become one complex person. Had the human nature of Christ been created, and existed for some time before its assumption into personal union with the divine Word, each nature would have so long possessed its distinct personality; but upon their union into one personal substance, their individual personalities unite also into one complex person. Much more is this the case in the incarnation of Christ: his human nature never existed by itself, but had the commencement of its existence from its personal co-existence with the divine Word, and of a simple person, as God, made him a complex person, as God-man. And though these natures remain distinct from each other, or without all confusion or conversion, yet in this complex person are they united together by ties so strong as can never be broken; and in union so permanent as shall never be dissolved. Like the souls and bodies of the sons of men, which are
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united in our constitution without mixture or change of their natures, and though two distinct natures, yet, by their personal union and co-existence, make but one person; and like these souls and bodies that in our future immortal state shall be united, never to be separated: so the divine Logos and a human nature are connected in union that is truly personal; and though these natures are essentially distinct, their personal union shall never be dissolved. The complex person is God, and he is man: he has the complete divine nature in one of its personal distinctions, and a complete human nature, with all their essential properties, co-existing in his person; yet the divine nature is not confounded with the human, nor the human nature with the divine. The divinity is not degraded to humanity, nor the humanity exalted to divinity. As the natures are not transubstantiated, as little are their properties transferred. The infinite divinity partakes not the finite qualities of the humanity, nor the finite humanity the infinite perfections of the divinity. The divine nature becomes not finite in essence, knowledge or power, nor the human omnipresent, omniscient or almighty, but every nature retains the properties that essentially belong to it. Yet these natures, as they co-exist in one person, co-exist and act in the most perfect harmony and consistence with each other. Like the soul in our complex nature, so the divine Logos in the complex person of Christ is the great principle of life, direction, and agency; and the human nature, like our animal frame, is justly under its direction and influence. The divinity exerts itself in communicating to the humanity every endowment intellectual and moral, and all competent happiness, adapted to the different states

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and characters in which he was to act ; and the humanity ever exists and acts in just consonance and subjection to its indwelling Deity. The general person, containing a divine and human nature, may be denominated from the one nature, from the other, or from both ; and may have all the attributes of each ascribed to him. And as these natures were united in a way similar to generation, and this complex person was generated by God, and conceived in and born of the Blessed Virgin, he may be, and in Scripture is indiscriminately designed the Son of God, or the Son of Man.



C H A P. V.

Of the personal Excellence and Dignity of the Son of God.

AFTER the generation of the Son of God, it follows that we treat next of the excellence and dignity of the person generated. This is not only an essential part of this great subject, but a part too of capital importance. From the complex person of the Son of God, and the excellence of that person, flows his fitness for every office he was intended to discharge as the Son of God and Saviour of Men. Ignorance of this personal excellence is the primary source of that disregard to him that so impiously prevails in the world; whereas, just conceptions of his dignity and glory would at once support our hopes of every blessing we expect from him, and cherish every dutiful regard we justly owe to him. The natures divine and human which compose his person, and several of the characters belonging to these natures, we have already mentioned in the first chapter. But these natures were then rather proved than explained; rather established to pave the way for ascertaining in what respect our Saviour is the Son of God, than to exhibit his dignity in that person and character. But now that we have endeavoured by every evidence of revelation to decide this matter, and have explained his generation agreeably to that decision, let us, for our farther knowledge of him, proceed to investigate and display, in the most obvious points, his personal excellence, dignity and glory.

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I. This illustrious person is the Son of God, his only begotten Son, and infinitely superior to all those beings, who in an inferior sense are called the Sons of God. This point of our Saviour's dignity results immediately from that divine generation of his complex person, which we last explained. From all eternity he had been the divine Logos, co-existing with the other divine subsistences in the same divine essence, and possessing every divine perfection, glory and happiness thereto belonging. But in the fulness of time, God's co-essential, co-equal, and co-eternal Word, assumed our humanity to his divinity by divine generation, and of the Word of God; became also his Son. In assuming this new, he did not lay aside his former character. His divine subsistence is immutable, and his divine relation to the Father in that personal subsistence is immutable, as every thing in divinity ever must be. Accordingly, though St. John informs us, that the divine Word, by being made flesh, became the begotten Son of God, and commonly describes him after his incarnation by that name; yet, to show us that he did not lay aside, but continued also in his original character, he, after his incarnation, represents him still as the Word of God, *Rev. xix. 13.* By receiving this additional nature, he receives an additional character himself, and an additional relation to God. By the accession of a human nature to his divine person, he, of the Word of God, becomes Immanuel, God-man; and receiving this accession in the way of generation, he who is the essential Word of God in his divine, becomes the Son of God in his complex person. This gives him at once the highest dignity, perfection, and excellence. To be the son of an earthly king, is reckoned

reckoned the highest earthly honour to which a child can be born. What honour must it then be, to be the Son of God—the Maker and Sovereign of the vast universe! But honour is not the whole, nay, nor the highest dignity implied in this character. With the relation of Son of God, Christ possesses the personal character—that founds it, and with the relative honour, he has all the real excellence that constitutes and adorns that super-eminent character. He possesses the divine nature of his Father, with all those great and glorious perfections that are essential to that nature. These belonged to him eternally as God's co-essential Word, and all these continue to belong to him as the Son of God, or Word incarnate. No character can give him a nearer connexion with God, nor possess him of higher excellence than his former one; yet this most intimate of all connexions is continued, and seconded by one which next to it, and along with it, gives him the endeared relation of his proper Son. No additional perfection can render divinity more perfect; yet his divine perfections, as the Word, continue with him as the Son of God; and have added to them in his complex person, all the perfections belonging to his human nature. As God's co-essential Word, existing in the same essence and possessed of the same perfections with the first person, he ever was the object of his supreme and infinite love. But this God of love now views him in his complex person; views him in that person as his Son, his only begotten Son, and loves him with a divine affection extended to his whole person, and suited to the endearing additional relation which he now bears to him. This character, therefore, of Son of God, be-

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comes in every view a source of his highest dignity, and gives him an excellence and glory that has no parallel. Many other beings are called sons of God; and have all some character from, and some relation to him, which found that honourable appellation. Angels are called his sons, *Job xxxviii. 7.* as being the productions of his creative power, and the finite images of his infinite perfection. Men are called his sons, or offspring, *Acts xvii. 28.* as being formed by the great Father of being, and formed after his likeness in those perfections, intellectual and moral, with which our nature was adorned. True Christians are his sons in an additional sense; as being regenerated by his Spirit after his divine image in wisdom and goodness, and invested in all the honours and privileges of his children. But Christ is the Son of God in a sense infinitely higher and properer than any of these. These are his sons by creation, or adoption; Christ is his Son by generation. His whole other children are his sons, by a similar nature. Christ is his begotten Son, who has a nature the same, and the same not only in kind, but which is the peculiar privilege of the Son of God, and which no other son of God, or of man, can claim; he has the very same numerical essence with his Father, though under a different personal subsistence. Correspondent to this superior ground of Sonship, is the infinite super-eminent over all the created children of God, which the Scriptures ascribe to him. Thus, says God, "I will make him my first born, higher than the kings of the earth," *Psal. lxxxix. 31.* giving him pre-eminence above the highest creatures in this terrestrial world. The same is his declared transcendence above the highest

highest created excellences in the heavenly kingdom. For he is made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they; for unto which of the angels, said he at any time, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Nay, such is his infinite superiority to the whole creation, angelic as well as human, that when God bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he sayeth, "Let all the angels of God worship him," *Heb. i. 4—6*. But in what is this infinite superiority represented to consist? Angels he declares to be created spirits, the Son to be God their Creator; angels to be ministers of his presence and kingdom, the Son to be the Prince-royal of heaven, the heir and joint-poseessor with his Father of the throne of the universe, while his inferior sons are only his subjects and servants, ministering to his Majesty in his celestial court, or executing his commands through his extensive empire. "And of angels he sayeth, "Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son, he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever. Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands.—But to which of the angels, said he at any time, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool," *Heb. i. 7, 8; 10, 13*.

This is the fundamental character, and the distinguishing glory of the great Messiah. It communicates to him, as God-man, his Father's nature, which is his highest excellence; his Father's image, which is his highest perfection; and his Father's love, which is his highest blessedness.

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sedness. It makes Christ the man that is God's fellow, as God himself hath declared, *Zech. xiii. 7.* and possessor of all the fulness, and heir to all the honours and possessions of God. This, therefore, his divine Father ever represents as his Son's distinguishing character; foretelling it by his prophets, announcing it at his conception and birth by an angel, declaring it with the heavens opened at his baptism, and confirming it by raising him in power from the dead, exalting him to his right hand in the highest heavens, and commanding his whole creation to honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.

II. He is the brightest and most perfect image of his divine Father. Every thing that generates, generates its like. A son, as he partakes their nature, so he naturally possesses a resemblance of his parents. Such is the established law of God, among human children; and the same natural law holds equally as to God's own divine and only begotten Son. As Son of Man, partaker of our nature, he resembles the species from which, as to his flesh, he descended, in a rational soul and human body; though these too are greatly superior to the most excellent of his kindred. But the chief constituent of his complex person is the divine Word; his chief and distinguishing character in that person, is, that he is the Son of God; and as Son of God, one of his noblest distinctions is, that he is the perfect image of his All-perfect Father. Thus St. Paul assures us, that "he is the image of the invisible God," *Col. i. 15.* Nay, in language the fullest and strongest, the same apostle affirms, that "he is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person," *Heb. i. 3.*

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This resemblance of the Deity extends to the general person of the Son, consisting of a divine and human nature, but lies chiefly in the former. In that respect he is God co-essential with his Father; and possessing the very same divine nature, possesses all those perfections that characterize and distinguish it. Accordingly, if we consult the sacred oracles, we shall find that there is not one essential perfection, belonging to the divine Father, but what belongs equally to his divine and co-essential Son. Thus is God an infinite and transcendent Spirit, *John* iv. 24. so also is the Son; for as to their divine essence, he declares, "I and my Father are one," *John* x. 30. Is the Father eternal, who is, was, and is to come, *Rev.* i. 4. the very same attribute in the very same words, is ascribed to the Son. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, *Rev.* i. 8. Is the Father infinite in essence, and so present with every creature that exists through the vast universe, *Psal.* cxxxix. 7, 8. so likewise is the Son. Thus, when his human nature was to be exalted to heaven, and his disciples to be left behind and to be dispersed through every nation, and to every quarter of the globe, promulgating his religion; he assures them, that in regard to his divine presence and essence, he should still be with them all, and with all their genuine successors to the end of the world, *Matth.* xxiv. 19. Is this eternal, infinite Father, without all variableness or shadow of turning, *James* i. 17. so, as to his divine nature, is the Son. Thus what the Psalmist affirmed of the Deity in general, the apostle applies to the Son, as second person in the

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the Godhead. "Thou, Lord, in the beginning, "hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the "heavens are the work of thy hands; they shall "perish, but thou remainest; and they shall all "wax old, as doth a garment, and as a vesture "shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be "changed; but thou art the same, and thy "years shall not fail," *Psf. cii. 24, 25, and Heb. i. 10—12.* Is the Father Almighty, *2 Cor. vi. 18.* so the Son, also is the Almighty, *Rev. i. 8.* Does the Father know all things, *1 John iii. 20.* so says St. Peter of the Son, "Lord, thou "knowest all things," *John xxi. 17.* Is the Father possessed of infinite wisdom, and called, The only wise God, *1 Tim. i. 17.* the Son also is called, "the only wise God, our Saviour," *Jude ver. 25.* Is the Father, in short, a person of infinite goodness and rectitude, purity and truth; so also is the Son, for "in him dwelleth "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," *Col. ii. 9.* And as the result of all this infinite perfection, is the Father declared in Scripture to be the "Highest," *Luke i. 32.* and "the Blessed," *Mark xiv. 61.* so is Christ the Son declared also to be "over all, God, and blessed for ever," *Rom. ix. 5.*

But is this image of God which is the glory of his Son, to be confined wholly to his divine nature? By no means. Indeed strictly speaking, Christ cannot be called the image of God, as to his essence or nature, for the essence of the Father and the Word are one and the same. When he is considered as the image of God in his divine character, it must be as he is a distinct divine person, co-existing with the Father in the same essence, and perfectly similar to him. Or, as this divine person is united with human nature, adorned

adorned with the divine image in wisdom and goodness, majesty and glory, so his being the image of God may denote either that godlike effulgence of divinity through his humanity, or the resemblance of his human to his divine nature. In either of these views this character includes also his human nature. And that this nature too is the subject of the divine image, the apostle plainly intimates when he defines Christ to be "the image of the invisible God, and the first-born of every creature." *Col. i. 15.* For the divine person of Christ is no more visible than that of the Father, and has no other relation to the creatures he hath made: so that these characters express his complex person, and so include his humanity as a subject also of the divine image. His human nature indeed, essentially and separately considered, gave him the likeness of humanity; but considered in that purity and perfection in which it was created, the glory to which it is exalted, and the personal union with its Maker which it ever possesses, it raises him far above the highest creatures, and exhibits the strongest resemblance of divinity creation affords. In his generation and while he conversed with men, he appeared more in the likeness of men; but in his resurrection from the dead and ascension into heaven, which the Scripture metaphorically represents as his second generation, he appeared more fully in the image of God. Yet in every state of his existence did the Son of God, even in his human nature, bear a most striking resemblance to his divine Father. Formed not by natural generation from fallen beings, as other men, but by supernatural divine power, as became the Son of God, he was free of that sinful taint that infects all the natural progeny of degenerate Adam. His soul, as became the most intimate

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intimate associate of the divine Logos, was created of the most excellent nature, and of the most capacious natural powers intellectual and active. These powers were adorned with the bright lineaments of his Father's image in wisdom, rectitude, and goodness, from their very creation; for from his generation was he "sanctified and so sent into the world," *John* x. 36. The Divine Spirit was given to him in all his gifts and graces in an immeasurable degree, to form this begotten, as he does the adopted Sons of God, after the divine image, *John* iii. 34. and to rest upon him as a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of council and might, a spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, *Isa.* xi. 2. Besides all this, he enjoyed a source of improvement and perfection, which none but himself could ever possess, even a personal union and communion of his human nature with that infinite source of light and perfection, his divine person. This communication of divine influence from his divine nature, and from the Holy Spirit essentially connected with that nature, to his humanity, like the energy of our souls towards our bodies, was indeed voluntary, and wisely adapted to the various stages through which he had to pass, and to the parts he had to act for the salvation of mankind. By all these means of improvement, was the Son of God formed after his Father's image, in the highest perfection which his human nature in the different estates of its being would admit. His capacious mind was stored with treasures of knowledge and wisdom, derived immediately from the omniscient mind divine, with which it was so closely connected. His will ever righteous, was, from his godlike wisdom, raised to the highest moral rectitude, resembling

resembling the will divine. His heart glowed with the most generous goodness and benevolence, resembling God his Father, whose highest and most amiable character is that he is love, 1 *John* iv. 8. So consummate was his wisdom, that he never was guilty of one instance of folly. So perfect his virtue, as rendered him superior to every assault of vice. So inviolable from his first existence were his principles of universal goodness, as no temptation could corrupt. So perfect through his whole life were his piety and virtue, as no extent of the divine law could exceed; and what no man, no angel, what not the highest created being, in its first and probationary state, can attain, rendered the man Christ Jesus absolutely impeccable. During his whole life on earth, his character was one uniform display of knowledge the most infallible, of wisdom the most consummate, of purity the most eminent, of piety the most sublime, of benevolence and kindness the most generous and extensive. Never was such godlike perfection to be found in man; never did angel, or the highest created being, in excellence and goodness so resemble God.

But if in his state of minority, as it were, upon earth, the holy Jesus so much resembled his Father, much more does he resemble him in his state of complete perfection in heaven. His body is spiritualized and raised to the highest resemblance of his soul, and his soul to the highest resemblance of God, that their finite natures will admit. Universal knowledge and wisdom, rectitude and goodness, in a super-eminent degree, dignify and exalt his soul within, while a godlike majesty and glory, transfused from its indwelling Deity, adorn his body without. As if a crystalline globe were cast round the body of the sun,

sun, which though it remained distinct from it, yet receiving and transmitting its rays, would strongly resemble the glorious orb it contained, so, by its personal union with, and its conformation to the Deity in its glorification in heaven, the human nature of Christ highly resembles his divine. The glory of the Deity transmitted through his humanity, renders him the image of the invisible God; and in his complex person as God-man, he is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. Other sons bear some resemblance of God their Father, in the spirituality of their natures, and the powers intellectual and moral with which their natures are endowed, but possess nothing of real divinity. Christ in his human nature possesses this similitude to God above all created beings; and what raises him infinitely above them all, he as the divine Word made flesh is God equal with the Father, for in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. They are the created children of God, and have only a finite resemblance of their maker. He is God's begotten Son, who has a divine as well as a created nature, and who therefore is the perfect and visible image of the invisible God, and the first-born of every creature, 1 *Col.* i. 15. which suggests to us.

III. That he is the head or chief of the creation of God. The former character referred chiefly to his divinity, this relates chiefly to his humanity; yet, as his being the image of God, extended also to his human, so his being the chief of God's creation results in a high degree from his divine nature. The creation of God is filled with orders of intelligent beings, rising from men to angels and archangels, cherubim

cherubim and seraphim, thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, in numbers and natures which we cannot fully understand in our present state. These are all children of the same divine Father, and rise in beautiful gradation of nature and excellence, dignity and glory, one above another, from the faintest to the brightest image of their great Original. But however excellent in perfection, or exalted in dignity, any of these created sons of the Almighty may be, his only begotten Son far transcends them all. His human nature connects him more particularly with the human kind, which is the lowest species we know of in the intelligent creation. Yet, by its personal co-existence with all-perfect divinity, and the godlike perfection and glory it possesses, it is raised in excellence and dignity above the highest of God's creation, and is exalted to be the head and Lord of all. His existence in this lower world, like that of his human brethren, was a state of gradual formation towards its compleat and immortal nature, and therefore his resurrection is beautifully represented as his compleat generation and birth. And he is in this respect called the "first-begotten, and the first-born from the dead," *Rev. i. 5. Col. i. 18.* And David's prediction of his generation, *Pf. ii. 7,* is applied to his resurrection, *Acts xiii. 33.* for though his incarnation made him the son of God, his resurrection raised him to the complete perfection and glory belonging to that character. During his residence among men, he appeared rather as man and the son of man. At his exaltation to God, he appeared in all the perfection and glory of the Son of God. While he tabernacled on earth, he condescended for our salvation to take upon him the form of a servant,

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servant, and descended lower than the lowest of his human brethren. But so soon as this state of self-abasement was over, he shone forth in all his dignity and excellence "the man who was God's "fellow," *Zech. xiii. 7.* and infinitely higher than the highest of creation. His body is adorned with universal splendor and glory, brighter than the sun, and his soul with wisdom and goodness, which far transcend the noblest intelligences. This unequalled perfection of his humanity raises him in excellence, and the personal union it has with the indwelling Deity gives him in dignity infinitely the pre-eminence above the whole creation, and exalts him even in his lowest nature, to be the head and Lord of the universe.

But should we consider the Son of God in his divine character, superadding to the highest perfection of the human the infinitely greater perfection of the divine nature, there all comparison with creation is lost; for what proportion can there be between infinite and finite, between the divine Word the equal of the Father, and the highest creature that can or does exist? The most glorious angels in heaven vanish in his presence, as the stars of the sky upon the appearance of the sun. His glorious humanity, though it obscures all created excellence, is here itself lost in that infinitely more glorious nature into which it is assumed; and the Son of God complexly considered, stands on the whole infinitely nearer to the Deity, than to the highest of the creation. For his divinity, as it is infinitely the most glorious and perfect, so it is infinitely the greatest constituent of the Son of God. But as his divinity connects him with God, and makes him equal with God; so his humanity connects him with the creatures, and by its excellence and dignity, places him

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at the head of the universe; and both conjoin'd in the constitution of his person, make him in one respect the Creator of all things, and in another, the head and glory of his creation. Thus says the Psalmist of him, "Thou art fairer than the children of men, grace is poured into thy lips, for God hath blessed thee for ever; and again God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness, above thy fellows." *Psal.* xlv. ii. 7. And the apostle affirms his preminence to angels. "For to which of the angels said he, at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee, and sit thou on my right hand, untill I make thine enemies thy footstool." But when he bringeth his first begotten into the world, he says, "Let all the angels of God worship him," *Heb.* i. 5, 6, 13. In his state of humiliation on earth, his glory was veiled under human flesh, and he was made a little lower than the angels by his suffering of death, but is now crowned with glory and honour, chap. ii. 9. Raised from the dead, God set him at his own right hand, in the highest heavens. There his divinity diffuses itself full in and over his humanity, not deifying it indeed, but rendering it the likest and the nearest to Deity, its created nature can be. There he is placed by his Father, on his right hand, "Far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come," *Eph.* i. 20, 21. And there he reigns, the confessed Lord and glory of the creation, in whom his Father supremely delights; and whom his whole empire of virtuous beings, from the lowest to the highest, contemplate with wonder, reverence and love, and esteem it their honour to serve,

serve, their glory to resemble, and their happiness to enjoy for ever and ever.

IV. This Son of God is the conjunction of all being and perfection, and the grand connecting bond between God and creation, and of the various orders of creation with one another. These comprehensive characters relate to his whole complex person; his being the only begotten Son and perfect image of his Father, respected chiefly his divinity; his being the first-born and head of the creation, regarded chiefly his humanity, though they both included also his other natures. But this comprehends directly and at once, both his deity and humanity, and so represents the excellence and glory of his general person.

Christ is a conjunction of all being, and of all in the highest possible perfection. The whole intelligent system of being, so far as we are informed of it, includes the great eternal and infinite Spirit, even God; pure and finite spirits, created by him, which we call angels; and spirits connected with material bodies, as men. The first of these stands infinitely superior to and distinct from all created essences, yet comes under the generical class of being. Of these classes of being, the two first are perfectly simple and homogeneous, the last is a compound one. Man, though the lowest, is the most wonderful being that we know in the creation; he is a conjunction and abridgement of all created nature. His soul connects him with the angelic, his body with the animal creation, so that the spiritual and material worlds unite in our person. But he who is the Son of God, and the Son of Man, is yet greatly more wonderful: for in him, not only every species of created being, but the infinite Creator too, are personally united. His
subsistence

substance as the divine Word essentially unites him with God; his glorious soul stands related to the whole spiritual creation of angels and men; yet, formed for union with his divine person on the one hand, and his human body on the other, it both rises above angels, and yet condescends by its union with a human body to class with men, and so gives Christ in a special manner the nature of man.

But as all these excellent natures are united in Christ, so they are all united in him in their highest perfection. As God, he is the Most High God, equal with the other divine substances in the Godhead; for there are no degrees, and no differences in an infinite being. As a created spirit, his soul in nature is allied to all created spirits; yet in excellence and perfection is superior to them all. As man, he possesses the same specific nature with all his brethren; but that human nature is raised to the highest excellence and glory, of which it is susceptible, and from its co-existence with the divinity, to a dignity which the highest of creation can never enjoy. Uniting these natures, he unites their perfections; and uniting these natures in their highest pitch of perfection, he unites all their perfections in the highest degree. Every divine and infinite perfection, of eternal existence, infinite essence, all-sufficient fulness, omnipotent power, omniscient knowledge, infallible wisdom, invariable rectitude, and boundless goodness, essential to the Deity, and possessed by the other co-essential substances in that Deity, are in the same supreme degree possessed by the Son. All those finite, yet glorious excellences, conferred by the Father of being and perfection on his created children, and resembling those in their all-perfect Father, are in their

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highest degree bestowed upon him, who, in pre-eminence above the whole creation, is his begotten, his only begotten Son. As he is the conjunction of universal being, so he is also the assemblage of all perfection. No wonder then that the first character given of him by the prophet, should be אֱלֹהִים Wonderful, *Isai.* ix. 6. or that the first article stated by the apostle in the mystery of godliness, should be this, "God manifested in the flesh," *1 Tim.* iii. 16. for every species of nature, infinite and finite, self-existent and created, every species of excellent essence and perfection, divine, angelic and human, by the most mysterious conjunction are united in the person of the Son of God.

Thus uniting all being in the constitution of his person, this glorious Immanuel becomes the grand connecting bond between God and creation, and of the different parts of creation with each other. God is connected with the universe as its Creator, Preserver, and Lord; and by this their common Maker and Lord, and the beautiful dependence and gradation he hath established through the great system, are all the parts of it closely connected. By all these ties does Christ, as God, connect the various parts of creation; "for by him were all things created, and by him do they all consist," *Col.* i. 16, 17. But the grand connecting bond between God and creation, and between the different parts of creation with one another, is the Son of God. What the Stoics of old, and Spinozists of late, falsely held as to the union between God and the universe, holds in a high degree in God's Son our Saviour; here God is embodied with a created nature; here he is connected with the spiritual system in the union of the

the divine Word with Christ's human soul, Spirit finite with infinite, human with divine; and through its connection with his human body, he is connected, though less closely, with the material system. But as he connects God with creation, and creation with God, so he connects the great parts of creation one with another. His human nature, though specifically the lowest, yet in that super-eminent excellence in which he hath assumed it, ranks too with every superior order of created intelligences, and surpasses far the highest of them; yet from the highest to the lowest connects the whole, gives them a nearer relation to God and to each other, and lays a firmer ground of friendship with both, than otherwise had been enjoyed. In short, this glorious person fills up the infinite chasm, and forms the connecting link in the chain of universal being, between God and his creation. Or like the head in the human system, that unites the spirit with its inferior animal body, possesses the nature of both, and all the qualities of both, and all these qualities in their highest perfection, and is the established bond of union and intercourse between the whole, so is the second person in the Godhead united with our nature. He connects God with creation, and creation with God; the intellectual with the material, and the various orders of created intelligences with each other, in bands that shall never be dissolved. Jesus is the Son at once of God and of man, and the cement of everlasting union betwixt them. This begotten Son connects the divine Father of the universe in closer and more endearing conjunction with his created children; and by the constitution of his mediatorial person, as well as by the exercise of his mediatorial offices, is form-

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ed to unite God and his creation, in love and friendship that shall endure for ever. This our Saviour himself intimates, when he thus prays to his Father in behalf of his church, "that they
 " all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and
 " I in thee, that they also may be one in us.
 " I in them and thou in me, that they may be
 " made perfect in one, and that the world may
 " know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved
 " them, as thou hast loved me," *John* xvii. 21, 23. This the apostle declares at large, when he assures us, "it was the purpose of God, that in
 " the dispensation of the fulness of times, he
 " might gather together in one, or reunite under
 " one head," as the word *ανακεφαλαιωσασθαι* signifies, "all things in Christ, both which are in
 " heaven, and which are on earth, even in him," *Eph.* i. 10. "For in him it pleased the Father,
 " that all fulness should dwell, and having made
 " peace through the blood of his cross, by him
 " to reconcile all things to himself, even by him,
 " whether they be things on earth, or things in
 " heaven," *Col.* i. 19, 20. But this naturally brings us forward from the person to the offices of the Son of God, which is to be the subject of the next chapter.

C H A P. VI.

*Of the great and important Offices the Son of
God was to execute.*

WHEN an extraordinary person is; by divine appointment, sent forth into the world, some adequate end must needs be designed by it; for the allwise Creator and ruler of the universe can do nothing in vain. The most extraordinary person that ever appeared in the world, was the Son of God. In him deity and humanity, the creator and an abridgment of his creation, are united, and co-exist in the same person; and this person, though infinitely the highest and holiest that ever partook a created nature, was subjected, as we shall see, to the deepest abasement and sufferings that ever were endured. This most wonderful phenomenon, in the moral world, hath employed the scrutiny, not only of human but angelic minds, from its first exhibition, and must excite the mingled wonder, satisfaction, and joy of God's rational creation to endless ages. But, though no finite intelligence shall ever be able fully to comprehend the constitution of this glorious person, and all the great designs effected by his agency; yet, every candid and discerning mind, that attends to the various offices divine and human he was to perform, and to the honour thence resulting to God and the happiness to his creatures, must be convinced, that a person only who was God and Man could perform these offices, and that this whole scheme is not only

most worthy of God, but the most consummate contrivance of his wisdom and manifestation of his goodness, that ever was given to his rational creation. From the personal then, let us proceed to consider and unfold the official character of the Son of God. To mention and explain at large, all the particular offices this illustrious person was to execute, were inconsistent with the conciseness of our present plan. We shall; therefore, represent those offices that are more capital and comprehensive, together with their necessity and our Saviour's execution of them, in a general way; by which the necessity and propriety of his personal character, and his important offices for the honour of his Father and the happiness of his brethren, will be clearly perceived.

I. This illustrious person was to be the Saviour of his perishing brethren of mankind. This is the primary office of the Son of God with regard to the creation, and comprehends all his particular offices with respect to mankind; and, therefore, this claims our first consideration. It was our nature particularly into which he was born, for it was our salvation in a special manner he was designed to accomplish. Accordingly, the first and the most general official name, by which he was called, is Jesus; given him for this express reason, that he was to save his people from their sins, *Matth. i. 21.*

By the temptations of Satan, and their own sinful compliance with them, the first parents of our human race had transgressed those just laws their great Maker prescribed to them, for the preservation and improvement of their own perfection and happiness, and the communication of the same perfection and happiness to their offspring

offspring. By this most criminal offence, they had forfeited to themselves and their posterity, all those blessings which the divine goodness had promised as the reward of their obedience; and involved both in all those evils, which are either the natural consequence, or the just and declared punishment of their transgression. We had lost the original perfection of our nature in knowledge, rectitude and goodness, and were involved in much imperfection and depravity. In consequence of this and our own actual sins proceeding from it, we had forfeited the favour of God, which is our chief good, and incurred his displeasure and the effects of it, which is our greatest misery. As to our body, we had forfeited the supernatural blessing of immortality, which should have been the reward, and a most proper one, of a pure and guiltless soul, and were sunk down to that state of disease and mortality, that are the consequence of animal nature and the declared punishment of that sin, by which supernatural perfection of mind and immortality of body were forfeited to mankind. As the future effect of these evils, we had forfeited life eternal in the everlasting image and enjoyment of God in a higher and happier world, and rendered ourselves, soul and body, obnoxious by our sins to everlasting destruction. Such were the sad losses we had sustained, and the many dreadful evils in which we were involved. What completed our misery was, that we had neither inclination nor ability to extricate ourselves from these terrible evils, and recover the happiness from which we had fallen. The rectitude of the Deity, and the nature of things required perfect conformity to his image, as the first foundation of happiness, and to qualify

lily us for the expressions of his favour to complete it. The same rectitude of the divine nature, and the established laws of his moral government, required condign atonement by sufferings and death to expiate our sins, and procure our deliverance from future punishments, and perfect future obedience to his laws, to give us a title to heaven and eternal happiness. But how impracticable were these to fallen mankind ! weak and depraved creatures, we could not recover our proper perfection in our Father's image, the necessary foundation of his favour and our own happiness. Finite and sinful creatures, we could as little make a proper satisfaction for our numberless sins committed against the Majesty of God, and in violation of the infinite obligations we are under to obey him, so as to appease his just displeasure and regain his favour. Impure and guilty, we could never acquire either meetness or title to his heavenly kingdom ; but must have sunk, at last, into the regions of darkness and destruction for ever. But what could never have been effected by us, or by the ordinary establishment of his moral government, the gracious Father of the universe had determined to accomplish by an extraordinary, but most God-like dispensation of his grace. Mankind, though they had fallen by their own default, yet they had fallen also through the temptations of a superior, malicious, and artful adversary. Our first parents had been overcome by him, even in their primæval purity and perfection. Their posterity, through this fall of their parents, were born into life, destitute of original rectitude, and exposed from their first existence to the joint-influence of a sensualizing nature, a sinful world, and the temptations of the

the devil ; circumstances extremely unfavourable to their virtue and happiness. In strict justice we could never be intitled to the divine favour and salvation, all our miseries being owing chiefly to ourselves ; yet, no species of being could be more proper objects of the divine compassion. There were none whose recovery would contribute more to the glory of God, and the good of his creation ; and therefore none, for whose salvation every perfection of the divine nature would more engage him to interpose. This, blessed be his gracious name, was actually the case. His goodness and mercy moved our salvation, and his wisdom and rectitude devised the method by which it should be accomplished. The first and fundamental part of the grand scheme was to obtain a proper satisfaction for our sins, by which we might be delivered from guilt and condemnation, and restored to justification and life, consistently with the authority of the divine laws and government, and the happiness of God's rational empire as dependent on their observance of them. To accomplish this and the other great purposes of his mediation, it was resolved in the councils of the Sacred Trinity, that the eternal Word should assume our nature into union with his divine person, thereby becoming, at once, the Son of God and Man, and Mediator betwixt them. By this, he would dignify our inferior nature, and be qualified, by his obedience and atonement, to make satisfaction for our sins, and procure our redemption, not only in perfect consistency with the honour of God and the obedience and happiness of his rational creation, but to their highest advancement. To this office, therefore, he was destined from those eternal ages in which the plan of the universe

and of our salvation was designed ; and we were chosen in him, before the foundation of the world, *Eph. i. 4.* For this office, he was generated and born into our nature at the appointed period ; “ for when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons,” *Gal. iv. 4.* That our Maker might be completely qualified to be our Redeemer, he, according to the ancient type of him, *Ruth iv. 4, 5.* became our near kinsman. He assumed our nature in soul and body, that in the same nature that transgressed the divine law he might obey it, and that in the same nature that had dishonoured God by sin, he might honour him by an infinite satisfaction for sin. With our nature he assumed our place, substituting himself in our stead, that the punishment due to our sins might be legally transferred and inflicted upon him, and the merits of his satisfaction be extended, and its blessings bestowed upon us. And in this public character he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, that he might procure our redemption from sin and misery, and our recovery to every blessing of complete happiness ; “ for he took not fallen angels to redeem them,” as the original imports, “ but the seed of Abraham ;” whose seed he was to be, and was to save all out of all nations, who should, like faithful Abraham, believe in and obey him, *Gal. iii. 8.* “ Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people,” *Heb. ii. 16, 17.*

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In this general character of our Saviour, Christ unites and executes every mediatorial office, and hath purchased and bestows whatever is necessary for our complete salvation. Had we lost the proper perfection of our rational nature in a conformity to God in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, and sunk into opposite ignorance, depravity and impurity; this only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, effects this first and leading part of our salvation. As our great prophet, he hath given us in his Gospel a complete revelation of all divine truth necessary to our instruction. He bestows his divine Spirit to give these truths their proper convincing evidence on our minds, and their proper converting and sanctifying influence upon our hearts and lives. By these he translates us from darkness into light, enables us to believe and comply with his Gospel, turns us from impiety and impurity to religion and holiness, restores gradually our natures to their original perfection, makes us the children of God by regeneration, after his image, as expressed in his begotten Son our elder brother, and animating us with all the principles, and adorning us with the graces of the divine and Christian life, fits us for every duty and for every blessing of the Christian character. Had we by sin forfeited the divine favour and acceptance, and incurred his displeasure and liahleness to his wrath, the Son of God, as our great High Priest, gave himself for us a proper and infinite atonement, to expiate our guilt and procure our salvation. By the infinite merits of his obedience and death, he hath made the fullest satisfaction for all our sins, and purchased for us pardon and access into the divine favour, upon our faith and repentance, and

exalted a Prince and Saviour to give both repentance unto Israel and the forgiveness of sins, *Acts* v. 31. Were we by sin deprived of immortality and made liable to death, Christ, as our Redeemer, delivers us by his merits from the sting of death, and changes it from being the despairful gate to destruction, to be the way to life eternal; and, as our complete deliverer, he, by his power, will raise in due time our bodies from corruption and mortality, to incorruption, life, and glory everlasting; "for as
 "the children are partakers of flesh and blood,
 "he also himself likewise took part of the same,
 "that through death he might destroy him that
 "had the power of death, that is the devil,
 "and deliver them, who through fear of death
 "were all their life-time subject to bondage,"
Heb. ii. 14, 15.

Finally, had we by sin forfeited life everlasting in heaven, and become liable to death eternal in hell, our complete Saviour hath, by his atonement and obedience, procured our deliverance from future condemnation and punishment, and redeemed to us the inheritance of heaven which we had forfeited. He will come again as judge of the world, at the consummation of the great scheme, and take us to himself into the heavenly mansions he hath purchased for us, where, adorned with his image in full perfection, we shall be admitted into the immediate presence of our Father and Redeemer, behold their glory, and enjoy all the felicities heaven furnishes out, or our exalted natures can desire and possess for ever and ever.
 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his
 "only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in
 "him might not perish, but have everlasting
 "life: for God sent not his Son into the world,
 "to

“ to condemn the world, but that the world
“ through him might be saved,” *John* iii. 16. 17.

II. This glorious Son of God is the great mediator, the general reconciler, and uniting head of the creation.

The good offices of the Son of God, though exerted in an eminent degree, toward his brethren of mankind, are far from being confined to the children of men. They are universal, as the creation he had formed, and contribute to the happiness of every species of created intelligences. The human, indeed, was the nature his infinite goodness condescended to assume: and the human-kind were to be the primary objects of his mediatorial benignity. But the human contains a connection with superior natures, and these superior as well as our inferior natures, all created by the same eternal Word, were to be farther connected with God and with one another, by this Word incarnate, God's illustrious Son.

The disobedience of man by the temptations of Satan had introduced a very general discord into the rational world. Rebellious man had become an enemy to God, his Maker and Lord, and God, infinitely holy and just, must have been an enemy to man. Angels, who would have been the friends of men, had we remained in our duty, through our rebellion against their and our Father had become their enemies, as they necessarily are to all who are enemies to God and goodness. The Jews, from whence the promised Messiah was more directly to spring, were necessarily divided from the Gentiles by the ceremonial law, till the time of his appearance; and overvaluing themselves on account of their religious privileges held all their heathen brethren in sovereign contempt. The Gentiles, ignorant of the true,
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and blindly devoted to every false religion, piqued themselves on their learning and policy, and repaid the contempt of the Jews with equal prejudice and disdain. Every nation on earth having their different gods, their different religions, laws and policy, were in opposition to each other, having no cement of union, but what the force of their common conquerors imposed; nor bond of friendship, but what their common nature or necessities gave them: so that a general opposition of principles long prevailed among mankind to their general hurt.

None but the Son of God could reconcile these differences, and restore peace and amity between God and his creatures, and between these different creatures who were thus at variance. To effect these great purposes so worthy of God, was one capital design of God's uniting his essential Word with created nature, and of this divine person by that union becoming the Son of God. The discord had originated from man's disobedience, and by the personal union of God with our nature, and the offices he was therein to perform, did the divine wisdom see it fit and necessary to remove it. Uniting every nature divine and created in the constitution of his person, he was admirably qualified, as general mediator, for reconciling by his offices these discordant parties, and re-uniting them in the most honourable and eternal friendship. This we are assured was the gracious purpose of God, in sending his Son into the world, even "that in the dispensation of
" the fulness of times, he might gather together
" in one, all things in Christ, both which are
" in heaven, and which are on earth," *Eph. i. 10.* And this, we know, he has already in a great degree effected, and will accomplish fully in the
course

course of his mediation. Thus, was man, by sin, become a rebel to his Almighty Creator and Lord, Christ, by his word and spirit, reconciles us to him, bringing us into a filial regard to our heavenly Father, and a dutiful submission to the laws of his grace and government. "For all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation," 2 *Cor.* v. 18. Was the righteous Lord of the universe most justly offended with his creatures who had turned rebels against him, Christ by his full atonement for our offences on earth, and his ever prevalent intercession as our advocate in heaven, hath rendered his great Father reconcileable to all men; and reconciled to all such as comply with his gospel. "For God is in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them," 2 *Cor.* v. 19. Had angels, who remained faithful to their sovereign, become enemies to man who had wickedly revolted from him, they are now, upon this reconciliation of man to God, and of God to man, by this glorious Mediator, made most benevolent and friendly. They rejoice in the recovery of their human brethren, by the labours and merits of our gracious Redeemer, from sin and woe to God and happiness. They triumph in the victories gained by the captain of salvation over the policy and malice of the powers of darkness. They exult in the vast accession of virtuous and happy beings made to the empire of God, by the mighty achievements of his Son. With their whole might they contribute to the advancement of the glorious scheme, acting as ministering spirits, sent forth by our common Creator and Lord, to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation,

salvation, *Heb. i. 14.* And when the grand design is consummated, then shall man and angels not only be reconciled, but united in the highest and most inalterable friendship, when through the merits and grace of the Son of God, we the younger sons of the heaven-born family, having passed through our state of minority, are made completely the Sons of God by the resurrection. And having become *ισαγγελοι*, equal or like unto the angels, as our Lord assures us, *Luke xx. 36.* shall be advanced to the same heaven, and enjoy the same supreme blessedness with these illustrious and benevolent beings through eternal ages. Farther,

Had these two divisions of mankind, the Jews and the Gentiles, been long in a state of mutual enmity, the great reconciler hath removed the occasions of discord, that of enemies they might be friends. In his generation and birth, though immediately and chiefly of the Jews, he was also, as to several of his ancestors, allied to the Gentiles. By his obedience and sacrifice, he fulfilled and abolished the ceremonial law, which, like the partition wall in the temple that divided the Jews and the Gentiles, had long divided the Jewish and the Gentile worlds. He purchased salvation for both, reveals it to both, and on their belief of his revelation, bestows it equally on both, for "he is a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel," *Luke ii. 32.* He hath established a dispensation of religion, in which neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature, and faith which worketh by love. On mens compliance with this noblest of religions, both Jews and Gentiles are reconciled to God as their Father, united to the Son of God as their Saviour and Lord,
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animated by the same Divine Spirit, made the happy members of the same church on earth, and shall be incorporated into one general assembly and church of the first-born in heaven for ever: "For he is our peace, says the apostle, "who hath made both one, and hath broken "down the middle wall of partition between us; "having abolished in his flesh the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to "make in himself, of twain, one new man; so "making peace; and that he might reconcile "both unto God in one body by the cross, "having slain the enmity thereby, and came "and preached peace to them which were "afar off, and to them that were near: for "through him we both have an access by one "Spirit unto the Father," *Eph. ii. 14, 18.*

In fine Christ hath laid the firmest foundation of reconciliation and friendship among all mankind in time, and on their proper compliance with his gospel, of friendship the most exalted and permanent through eternity. He hath introduced a religion calculated to be the religion of mankind; a religion, like its benevolent author, whose spirit is goodness, and whose law is love, and of which the whole tendency and aim is to reconcile and unite men to God, in true piety and holiness, and to one another in charity and love. To the ties of friendship which we have as men, it hath superadded the more tender and endearing ones that cement us as Christians. He unites men in the same most excellent religion; and makes all who sincerely embrace it, children of the same divine Father, brethren of the same Redeemer, and partakers of the same Spirit and grace, and fellow-heirs of heaven and eternal glory. Considerations which have the most powerful

erful tendency to extinguish every hostile and malevolent disposition, and to inspire universal benevolence among all who truly feel their divine influence. And when his grand uniting plan is accomplished, then shall all the friends of God and goodness, a number which no man can number, whom he has reconciled to God, to himself, and to one another in time, out of all kindreds, and nations, and languages, be united in universal love through never ending ages.

Thus is the Son of God the general mediator of reconciliation and bond of union and friendship between God Most High, and his great empire of obedient or redeemed creatures. For it hath pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell, and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself, even by him, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven, *Col. i. 19, 20.* He unites, we have seen, universal nature in the constitution of his person: and he unites universal being by his office of mediator, for which that person was constituted. In both he is the grand medium and bond of union and communion, love and friendship, between God and his creation, uniting God with created nature, angels to men, men to angels, God to the whole, and the whole to God, and to each other in harmony and union that shall never be dissolved. He restores the friendship and peace when it was broken, he guaranties it where continued or restored. And having begun and carried on his Godlike design in time, he will complete it at the consummation of the world; and remaining in his person the indissolved bond of union between God and his obedient or redeemed subjects,
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will by his character and offices preserve that union inviolate to eternity.

III. The Son of God is the illustrious subduer and destroyer of Satan's kingdom, and the expeller of vice and irreclaimably vicious beings out of his Father's empire.

This office was most necessary to the salvation of mankind, and the reconciliation Christ was to accomplish and preserve in the creation of God. Satan, the arch-rebel against God, had revolted from allegiance to his Maker and sovereign, and drawn many of God's angelic subjects into the same criminal apostasy. Banished with his wicked associates from the mansions of purity, he next seduced our first parents into a similar disobedience. The dominion he gained over the parents he hath maintained in a great degree over their fallen posterity, from age to age, in this manner adding man to his angelic subjects, and establishing a kingdom of impiety, vice, and misery, in the world, in opposition to God's empire of goodness and happiness. Thus he is called "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," *Eph. ii. 2.* "The prince of this world," from the dominion over it he possesses, *John xii. 13.* And "the God of this world," *2 Cor. iv. 4.* from the religious worship actually performed to him, and his associates, *2 Kings, i. 2, 3. Psa. cvi. 37. 1 Cor. x. 20.* by deluded mortals, and the regards all wicked beings give to him, in preference to God. This kingdom of Satan is founded in ignorance, consists in impiety and vice, is confirmed by the dominion of sin and bands of guilt, in which its slaves are involved, and tends directly to the dishonour

dishonour of God, and the eternal destruction of his rational creatures. As it had commenced from the seduction and fall of our first parents, it had enlarged as the world of fallen mankind enlarged. And though, even in the most degenerate ages, God always had a church of wise and well affected subjects, yet by the artifices of Satan, and mens own depravity, a great part of the human kind had, with equal folly and wickedness, chosen rather to be the slaves of Satan their destroyer, than dutiful subjects of God their Creator and Lord. At the time of our Saviour's appearance, it had arrived at its greatest height, in that ignorance of the true God and religion, and that worship of false and impure deities and devils, and the practice of impiety, unrighteousness and impurity that had overrun the world. Many expedients had the Divine Goodness employed to check the progress of these malignant beings, and reclaim his human offspring to their duty and happiness. Revelations of the true God, and of his laws and grace were given for their instruction. Prophets were sent to admonish them of their sin, and call them to reformation. The most awful punishments were denounced, and on proper occasions inflicted, to convince them of their danger, and awaken them to repentance. Many blessings of the Divine Goodness were bestowed upon them, to reconcile and bring them back to God and their duty, from which the devil had seduced them. These, by the divine blessing, were made effectual for the conversion and recovery of many in all ages; but still were insufficient for any general reformation. The Son of God only was able to oppose, and frustrate the designs of the arch-enemy to God
and

and his creation, and to redeem mankind from the tyranny of the devil and liableness to hell, and restore them to the obedience and favour of their rightful sovereign. Him therefore the Divine Wisdom and Goodness had before the creation ordained, and at the appointed time sent him into the world on this glorious design. Accordingly we find that the very first promise of the Saviour holds him forth in this express character, "as the seed of the woman who should bruise the head of the serpent," *Gen. iii. 15.* And St. *John* assures us, that "for this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil," *John iii. 8.* This great enterprize he hath atchieved in part, and will accomplish in perfection, when his office is completed. Apostate angels, who enjoyed every advantage for allegiance, but had with unexampled impiety rebelled against their Maker, and, under his forbearance to inflict the full punishment their apostasy deserved, had persisted in their rebellion, and propagated it in the world to the utmost of their power, he totally abandons to their own impiety and ruin; resolving to make them the monuments of his just displeasure at sin, and their exemplary punishment the means of confirming his other subjects in obedience and happiness for ever. Man was in a state more pitiable and reclaimable, and him his freedom and mercy intended to reclaim. Wherefore he took not hold of angels to redeem them, but of men, even the seed of Abraham his church who should believe in him. He had all along in his divine character opposed the kingdom of Satan, and preserved a people to himself. But now as God-man he came in a
more

more visible character to purchase our redemption by his merits; and by his personal agency, and the more extensive and efficacious revelation of his grace, to overthrow the kingdom of sin and Satan, and re-establish more fully the dominion of God and righteousness among men. When the Son of God thus appeared, he declared, "now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out," *John xii.*

31. Accordingly the event began immediately to verify the prediction. To mortify these haughty demons, and to qualify himself completely to rescue mankind from their dominion, the Divine Word, first of all, assumed our nature into union with his Godhead, thereby dignifying it above angels, and ensuring our redemption, when these wicked spirits were left to perish in their wickedness. During his residence on earth, he baffled Satan in every repeated assault: prelude to the total and eternal overthrow he should at last give him. By the victorious efficacy of his truth and grace, and the triumphant power of his miracles, which were all levelled against the devil and his works, he cast Satan out of the souls and bodies of all who applied to him; a sign of the entire expulsion from God's kingdom, which the devil and his emissaries should finally receive. But guilty mankind could not legally be delivered from the devil and hell, without a proper satisfaction to God, to free them from the guilt, and his Spirit to deliver them from the dominion of sin. To accomplish this fundamental part of our redemption from all our enemies, the captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings, *Heb. ii. 10.* "For, as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the

“ the same, that through death he might de-
 “ stroy him that had the power of death, that is
 “ the devil, and deliver them who through fear
 “ of death, were all their life time subject to
 “ bondage,” *Heb. ii. 14, 15.* By this great
 atonement for our sinful world Christ hath pro-
 cured redemption from sin and Satan, death and
 hell, to his brethren of mankind, and every right
 to translate them from the slavery of Satan into
 his kingdom of grace and salvation on earth, and
 to advance them to supply the thrones vacated
 by these apostate spirits, in his heavenly king-
 dom. Thus while the serpent who tempted
 Judas to betray, and the Jews to condemn the
 Son of God, bruised for a little, the lowest part of
 his complex person, his heel, the Son of God,
 by the merits of these sufferings, bruised mortally
 the serpent’s head. He triumphed over all his
 power and policy, rescued from him a great part
 of his subjects, and covered the prince of dark-
 ness with redoubled confusion. Then did he
 spoil principalities and powers of their usurped
 kingdom, and make a shew of these vanquished
 enemies of God and his creation, triumphing
 over them, *Col. ii. 15.* Having conquered Satan
 by his victorious death, he proceeds next to
 overthrow his kingdom of impiety and wicked-
 ness. By his gospel preached by his apostles, and
 accompanied with the power of his spirit, un-
 equalled before he attacked the kingdom of Satan
 in its greatest strength, and vanquishing every
 where the strong man armed, and keeping quiet
 possession of his house, he translated myriads of
 mankind in every nation and language from the
 kingdom of Satan into that kingdom of God he
 came down to establish. The human world that
 had

had been long under the dominion of the devil and his angels, involved in darkness, idolatry, superstition and vice, are converted to God and goodness, by his son Messiah, and the kingdoms of this earth became the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ. Before his office is fulfilled, his victory over the kingdom of darkness shall be extended, and the dominion of righteousness more fully established. But his complete conquest and expulsion of the devil and his adherents is deferred to grace the consummating act of Messiah's mediation at the end of the world. Then shall the arch-rebel with all his associates be sifted by the Son of God before his flaming tribunal, to answer for their impious opposition to the honour of his great Father, and the happiness of his human brethren. Those malignant fiends whom neither the goodness of his government could retain in their duty, nor his long-suffering patience could reclaim to it, shall be doomed for ever to the punishments they deserve. These too of our apostate race, whom neither the light of reason and God's general goodness, nor the superior light of revelation and riches of his grace, had recovered to God and goodness, but who preferred the slavery of sin and satan to the liberty and happiness of the servants of God, shall share the like wretched fate with their wicked master. "The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom, all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, where shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth," *Matt. xiii. 41, 42.* Every being, angelic or human, who would not comply with the laws of his government,

ment, moral or gracious, but remained obstinate and irreclaimable in their love of sin, and their aversion from God and holiness, shall be excluded those glorious regions, where God's eternal empire is to be established in perfect virtue and happiness; and shut up in that prison of destruction, his awful justice hath provided for them: when God's rational empire shall, by the administration of his Son, be cleared of all vice and vicious beings, to the highest honour of God, and the glorious Messiah; and the everlasting confusion of their enemies, and the perfection and happiness of their subjects for ever. "For
" then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the
" Father, when he shall have put down all rule,
" authority, and power; for he must reign till
" he hath put all enemies under his feet," 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25. But this naturally leads us to another office of the Son of God.

IV. That he is the grand restorer, preserver and improver, of God's rational creation in goodness and happiness for ever and ever.

This is the most general and the finishing office of the Son of God, extending to every province of his moral empire, and giving all the methods of his government their highest effect. The great design of God in all his works of creation and providence, is a manifestation of his divine perfections, in giving existence to his creatures, and promoting their perfection and happiness. And to this grand design, the Son of God, in every character, hath eminently contributed. By and with him as the divine Logos, were the designs of divine wisdom and goodness for these purposes decreed before all worlds. By

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him, was the universe created, and by his providence it is preserved. But by nothing are these intentions of his goodness more effectually promoted and secured, than by this Word's becoming flesh, and the Son of God and of Man, and by the offices he performs for the honour of God, and the happiness of his creatures. Take we a survey of his person, of his offices, of his sufferings, or his glory, we shall find them all admirably calculated, and all eminently conducive to exalt the dignity, promote the virtue and perfection, and advance the happiness of the intelligent creation. By assuming our nature into union with Deity, he hath raised man, who was inferior in excellence, to be superior in honour to higher beings, and when exalted to our proper perfection, to be on the whole equal to the angels. By the constitution of his person, which unites all existence, he hath advanced the rational creation into closer union with the Deity, and with one another, and given them higher security of their eternal existence, friendship and happiness. The blessed influence of his obedience and atonement, is effectual for redeeming his fallen and human subjects, but its moral influence extends to every species of his rational empire. Men, through his merits, are redeemed from guilt and condemnation to justification and life; by his power recovered from sin to holiness, and raised by both from animal to angelic beings; from worms on earth, to become rivals in glory and happiness with angels in heaven. Angels, though they needed not the merits of his righteousness to redeem them from sin and misery, yet the highest of them was dignified, and by his mediation they were mightily confirmed in
goodness

goodness and happiness. By the connection of God and his creation in the generation and constitution of his Son, the creation has got the best security possible for its eternal existence, and his virtuous creation of their eternal felicity; for what bond of union can be stronger than God's giving himself into personal union with his creation, and taking creation into personal union with himself? for if the head of the creation, united with the eternal fountain of life, must live for ever, the connected parts must live also. If the bond of union and medium of communion between the eternal Father and his vast empire continues, the union and communion thereby effected can never fail. Exalting creation into personal union with its divine Creator, Christ hath dignified and ennobled creation above what it was before, of creatures making them kinsmen, of the created children of God making them brethren of the Son of God, and more near relations of God through him. "For both he
" that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified
" are all of one, wherefore he is not ashamed to
" call them brethren," *Heb. ii. 11*. Connecting creation more closely with God, and with each other in his person and government, he by his mediatory offices communicates to the whole, all that happiness that results immediately from the divine favour or from the good offices of his creation to every being in it. Like the head in the human body, that connecting the animal part with the intellectual principle, dignifies, animates, and improves every inferior part of the animal frame: so Christ, as Son of God, and head of the creation, connecting the world with God,

and its different parts with each other, no less dignifies and improves the whole. By him as the grand repository of the divine Spirit and life, his related members are improved in all wisdom and goodness; and under his visible and gracious administration, as Lord and governor of the universe, all evil shall be extirpated from the empire of God, and righteousness and peace and happiness universally and for ever prevail. The irreclaimable rebels are banished his kingdom, to tempt the virtue, disturb the peace, and endanger the happiness of his subjects no more. The recoverable are reclaimed to their duty; the good confirmed in their goodness; men raised to a resemblance of angels in goodness and glory, and exalted to possess with them the same heavenly kingdom; angels raised to higher dignity and happiness; the whole dutiful creation improved in the divine image, their highest perfection; confirmed unalterably in their allegiance to him, their indispensable duty; blessed with his highest favour and enjoyment, their supreme happiness, and secured of its continuance and increasing improvement through eternal ages. Well, then, might the angels, that announced his birth, proclaim, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good-will, towards men," *Luke ii. 14.* for the honour of God and happiness of his creation were to be alike promoted by his Son our Saviour. And as in time this God-like design has been begun, and is carrying on, so through all eternity, shall it be preserved in perfection. By Christ, as vicegerent of God, in his immediate intercourse with his rational creation, shall the vast empire of Jehovah be visibly govern-

governed, confirmed in their love and duty to their eternal Father, and continued the happy objects of his love, through their immortal existence. Equally allied to God and his creation in person, he shall, by his office, secure their alliance to each other to eternity. The Son of God, he shall administer all things to his Father's glory; the Son of Man, he shall conduct every thing for his brethren's good. The creator of the universe as God, the head of the creation as man, the grand connecting bond in the universal system of being, as God-man; the divine Word embodied with created nature, he shall remain the medium of intercourse and guarantee of everlasting friendship between God and his creation; his power shall sustain his empire in eternal existence, and his government preserve them in love and obedience. His Spirit shall preserve them in eternal perfection, and his infinite fulness shall complete and secure their happiness for ever. Like the Sun, that best image of the divine glory and goodness in the material world, who adorns, cheers, and actuates his vast system through all its parts with his light and heat; so shall Christ the Sun of Righteousness, the brightest image of his Father, and glory of the whole creation, from his imperial throne in heaven enlighten and enliven, cheer and rejoice for ever his immense empire of virtuous beings through all its provinces; adorning them with his image their highest glory, and dispensing full to them every blessing of the divine goodness for ever and ever. God's whole creation shall rejoice in his Son as the everlasting friend of God and his creatures, and through eternity

shall admire and extol the consummate wisdom and goodness of this wonderful constitution, by which the honour of God is illustriously exalted, and the virtue and happiness of his creation are raised to the highest pitch, and secured by an establishment that can never be shaken.

Such are the capital offices the Son of God was to execute. And how fully do they demonstrate the necessity, and justify the wisdom and expediency of his marvellous generation, his wonderful person, and the labours and sufferings to which he was exposed. The generation and person of God's begotten Son, the condescensions of his life, and the humiliation of his death, ever have been, and ever must be held the most amazing of the works and ways of God. But though the wonder can never cease while the infinite dignity of the divine person is known, it ceases to be inexplicable and appears every way wise and worthy of God, so soon as the offices he was to execute are taken into the account. The redemption of fallen and confirmation of fallible; the reconciliation of discordant and the immutable establishment of all virtuous beings; the union of God with his creation, and of creation with God in ties and relations to the honour of both, and which can never be dissolved, were no ordinary purposes, and required no ordinary person to achieve. Nay, so arduous was the enterprise, that according to our best directed apprehensions of things from Scripture and reason, no person but the one provided was qualified to accomplish it. None but God-man and the Son of both could give that proper and condign satisfaction for our sins, that was necessary to purchase

chase our salvation, and could apply effectually this purchased salvation to its proper objects; none but God-man could be effectual mediator between God and man, and between men and angels, so as to remove the unhappy differences sin had occasioned, and restore reconciliation and peace in the creation of God. None but God-man could ransom our guilty world from the devil and hell; baffle the policy, and break the power of satan; destroy his kingdom of impiety and wickedness, and having humbled his pride in judging him at the bar of the Son of Man yet as Son too of God should banish him and all his followers from the great empire of God and righteousness, and consign them for ever to the prison of destruction. None but he who unites all natures, divine and created, could dignify creation, unite his creatures to their Creator, and to each other in such close and everlasting friendship; give them by his person such security for their eternal existence, and continuance in the divine favour and heaven, and by his administration attended with all the majesty of God, yet adapted to a more immediate and engaging intercourse with his creation, can so confirm and improve their goodness, to the honour of his divine Father, and the everlasting advantage and happiness of his rational subjects. "For neither
"is there salvation in any other; for there is
"no other name under heaven given among
"men, whereby we must be saved," *Acts* iv. 12. But what no other could effect, the Son of God could do and hath done. His complex person qualified him for his complicated office. His humiliation paved the way to his exaltation.

And by the whole hath he accomplished every great purpose for which he was appointed "For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell, and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself, even by him, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven," *Col. i. 19, 20.*



C H A P. VII.

Of the high Honours and Rewards to which the Son of God is exalted, with his just Claim to them.

TO the personal dignity of the Son of God succeed the honours he is possessed of; and to his important offices, the proper rewards which he receives for performing them. Every being is intitled to honour, in proportion to its excellence and dignity; and every beneficent being to rewards, correspondent to the offices it performs for the glory of God and the good of his creation. No being, having a created nature, ever possessed such personal dignity and excellence as did the Son of God; none ever stood in such near and endearing relations to God and his creation, and none ever merited such high degrees of their esteem and their affection. No being ever performed so many offices for the honour of God, and the happiness of his creation, as did the blessed Jesus, and none ever merited such illustrious rewards. The first state of his existence was a state of unexampled humiliation, labour and suffering; but the second and eternal one was a state of exaltation, triumph and glory. The glories and felicities possessed by the Son of God, may be considered as proper honours, with regard to his personal; and as rewards, with regard to his official character. But as these glories are essentially the same, and the Son of God and Saviour of the world who possesses them is the same person, it is proper to

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consider them conjunctly. For in both characters is Messiah entitled to, and in both does he possess these honours bestowed on him. We have considered his personal dignity and the chief offices he executes; let us now proceed to unfold the honours and rewards which in consequence of both he possesses, and the just title he has to them.

I. He is the supreme object of his Father's love and blessed with all its expressions, suitably to the character which he had to act. Every Son is naturally beloved of his Father, and from his Father's love flow all the blessings his Son receives from him. In like manner the only begotten Son of God is the object of his Father's supreme affection, and possesses this as his primary blessedness, and the source of every honour and reward his Father bestows on him. As the co-essential Word of God, he was the eternal object of his supreme love: he existed with him in the same essence, and he possessed with him all the same amiable and glorious perfections. Wherefore God the Father loved him as he loved himself, and from their joint perfection and mutual love, with that of their co-essential Spirit, did their supreme and eternal happiness result. Thus Christ declares, that "he had glory with the Father before the world was, and that the Father loved him before the foundation of the world," *John xvii. 5, 24.* But when this Word was made flesh, and appeared as the only begotten Son of God, he continued the object of God's love, as second person in the Godhead, and farther became the object of his paternal affection in character of his Son. God's infinite benevolence that terminated formerly in his divine,

vine, now extends itself to his whole complex person. He could love nothing more dearly than his co-essential Word, but he loves that divine Word now in the additional endearing character and relation of his Son; a Son who was the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person, and who assumed this character to do his Father the highest honour and pleasure in the recovery and establishment of that empire of reasonable beings his omnipotence had created. Accordingly we find that when Christ is mentioned by God as his Son, he is commonly mentioned at the same time as the special object of his love. Thus if God predicts him as his first born, he declares, that "his love he will ever keep for him, and his covenant shall stand fast with him," *Psal. lxxxix. 28.* Does he solemnly declare him his Son at his baptism, and install him in the public office of Mediator, for which he had sent him into the world; he says, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," *Matth. iii. 17.* and bestows on him his Spirit without measure, as the best expression of his love. When Christ had proceeded far in his labours for his Father's honour and the salvation of his brethren, God repeats the same declaration of his love to his dearest Son, and as a pledge and proof of it, gives him even while on earth, an anticipation of that glory he was for ever to be adorned with in heaven. Being engaged in prayer upon the holy mount, he was transfigured before his disciples, when his face did shine as the sun, and his garment was white as the light, while God appeared in a bright cloud, and again declared, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him," *Matth. xvii.*

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Amidst the deepest scenes of his last sufferings, he continued the supreme object of his Father's love, though the characters in which they now acted, forbid the immediate expression of it. When, as righteous governour of the world, God must put his Son our Saviour to grief, and fill his whole soul with sorrow; he feels to the very heart for his sorrowful Son, and removed as soon as possible from him, that deadly cup he had given him to drink. When Christ was about to be involved in darkness and sorrow, from the punishment due to our sins that was now inflicted on him, the sun is deprived of his brightness at noon-day, to announce to the world that the Sun of righteousness was then under an eclipse. And when he actually yielded up the ghost, the veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom, in sign that the real and complete atonement was now made for the sins of the world; and that the Great High Priest was now entered with his human soul as the life or blood of his sacrifice within the veil, in the highest heaven, and access laid open through his merits into the holiest of all. The graves too were opened at his death, and many dead arose at his resurrection, to show that he had subdued death, and was to be the resurrection and the life to all his followers.

Yet those marks of the divine regards which he was favoured with during his state of humiliation, were only pledges of the future honours to which he should be preferred. The full expressions of his Father's love, and the complete rewards of his services were bestowed only when he had finished the work he had given him to do. Accordingly he has no sooner performed the humbling but meritorious office of our Saviour, than

than he is declared the Son of God, with power by his resurrection from the dead. No sooner has he proved his resurrection, and settled the affairs of his kingdom on earth, than he is exalted to his kingdom of glory in heaven. Having vanquished all the enemies of God and his subjects, the Captain of salvation leads a triumph over them all, in his glorious ascension to this high capital of his empire. As the Son of God, he is now exalted to the high palace of heaven, the highest heaven; to receive eternally the expressions of his Father's love, for those unexampled expressions of love to his Father, and benevolence to his brethren he had in time exhibited. There he is invested, as God-man, with all that glory, which, as God, he had with the Father before all worlds. As the bright image of his glory, and the object of his love, he is not only exalted to his throne, but embosomed in the heart of his Father; and wrapt up in that effulgent glory, which is the symbol of his presence, and admitted to his most intimate love and enjoyment for ever; and hence he is called "the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father," *John* i. 18. There his human nature is, by the communication of Deity, so adorned with universal perfection, glory and blessedness, flowing from the divine love, as renders it the most truly God-like created nature can be. There he shines in glory brighter than the sun, and which like the sun in this lower world, fills the high regions of heaven with an eternal blaze of splendor and glory: for not only the Lord God, but the Lamb is the light of the new creation, *Rev.* xxi. 23. God views for ever the infinitely amiable glories of his character
divine

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divine and human, and all the offices he has done, is continually doing and will do, to eternity; and loves him with supreme affection, correspondent to his infinite personal amiableness and the unexampled offices he hath performed for the glory of his Father, and the good of his creation. There he possesses the full communication of his Father's goodness, filling his whole person with blifs and joy supreme and everlasting.

II. He is the heir and possessor of all things. A first-born son has generally, by the laws of men as well as of God, been held heir to his father; but an only son ever has. Christ is the only begotten son of God, and therefore, in all right, his only heir. As God, he hath a natural right to all things in conjunction with the other persons in of the Godhead; for by him "were all things created that are in heaven" and that are in earth, visible and invisible, "whether they be thrones or dominions, principalities or powers, all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him do all things consist," *Col. i. 16, 17*. But besides his natural right, as God, he as Son of God hath a right also of heirship to the whole creation. His having right to all things, as God, excludes not, but includes the joint-property of the other persons. In like manner, his right of heirship excludes not, but includes the conjunct title of the Father and Spirit. In constituting the Son his heir, the Father does not divest himself of his property or possession, but takes the Son into joint right to, and possession of all his fullness. His divine nature has a natural joint-right to the whole empire. The human nature, disjoined from the divine, can have no right,

right, but what is derived or assigned to it; yet it acquires right, in virtue of its personal union with the divine nature. Thus a wife acquires right in the inheritance of her husband, with whom she is connected, and the body in all the honours or dignities of the soul, with which it personally co-exists. Besides this natural right, founded in the divinity of Christ's person as creator of all worlds, and his right of inheritance to all things as the Son of God, he hath a right of purchase to this world he hath redeemed, and a right of assignation to the whole universe, by his Great Father, for the eminent services he hath done to him, and the favour and affection which his Father bears to him as his Son and the Saviour of the world. Thus, says Christ, "all things are delivered unto me of my Father," *Matt. xi. 27.* "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand," *John iii. 35.* And St. Paul unites both these rights, when he declares of the Son, that God his "Father hath appointed him heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds," *Heb. i. 2.* But of what is he the heir? He is heir of all the fulness of God. The whole character of his Father is communicated to his Son; "for he is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person," *Heb. i. 3.* The whole essential titles, are also conveyed to him; "for in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," *Col. i. 9.* The nature of God is in him; and, therefore, every name and every perfection, declarative of that nature we have seen, is ascribed to him. The whole creation of God is the inheritance of his Son. This world and its inhabitants, by triple right of creation, redemption,

tion, and assignation, are his; for, says God, "I have not only set thee on the holy hill of Zion, but I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession," *Psalms* ii. &c. Heaven is his throne and the seat of his empire, and all its inhabitants, angelic and human, are his property. In short, the whole fulness of God is his inheritance, and all the honours of the Deity are his; "for all things that the Father hath," says he, "are mine," *John* xv. 16. He is co-partner in the Creator, as he is God; and the head of the creation, as Man; and, as God-man, the Son of God, he is joint-proprietor with his father, and heir of the whole world.

Nor is he only heir, but actual possessor of all things. In his state of humiliation on earth, he seemed to divest himself for a little of the possession of all things in accommodation to the mean state in which, as Saviour of the world, he must first appear. Though he was rich, he for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. He suppressed the glories of his eternal Deity, under a veil of human flesh, till his servile state was accomplished, when he should assume to his whole person, as God-man, his glory, as God, and appear the Son of God, possessed of all the glory and fulness of his Father. Like the born heir and lord of the world, he used or disposed of the creatures as was proper for his own subsistence, the glory of his Father, and the good of his brethren. But, as became the Son of God and heir of heaven, and the great model his friends were to imitate, he practised a noble superiority to the enjoyments of this world, and aspired
after

after possessions nobler and more worthy.
 "The foxes have holes; the birds of the air,
 "nests; but the Son of Man had no where
 "to lay his head."

The glories he exhibited were chiefly the glories of grace and truth, and truly benevolent; he chose rather to do good to his human brethren, as a Saviour, than to receive honours from them, as the Son of God. But when his offices, as Redeemer of the world, were accomplished, then does the Son of God appear in his proper dignity, and take full possession of the glorious inheritance to which, by creation, birth-right, and merit, he was so fully entitled. The Son of Man, which was the character he commonly appeared in upon earth, now appears full to be the Son of God; and as when conversant with men, he appeared a God in human form, so his human nature, now that it is to converse with God, appears a man in the form of God. Formerly, he was heir, but heir under age; now come of age, he actually enters joint-possession with his Father of all his fulness. Invested with all the splendors of divine glory and majesty, he is seated with God on the throne of heaven, and declared joint proprietor and possessor with his Father, and the Divine Spirit of all worlds and of all beings. His glorified humanity enjoys the most exalted and blissful part of the creation; the imperial throne of heaven, and the grand court of glorious and virtuous intelligences that continually attend it; and, what is infinitely more blissful than these, the infinite Creator himself. His divinity pervades and possesses the whole immensity of creation, formed by his power, and sustained by his providence, as God, and now possessed

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possessed by him in the additional character of the Son of God, and heir of all; “for being
 “the brightness of his Father’s glory and the
 “express image of his person, when he had
 “by himself purged our sins, sat down on the
 “right hand of the Majesty on high, being
 “made so much better than the angels, as he
 “hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent
 “name than they,” *Heb. i. 3, 4.*

III. Christ the Son of God is constituted the lord and governor of the world. This in some respect might have been considered as belonging to the offices of Christ. But as these high characters are conferred on Christ, not only as the Son of God, but for services he performed as the Saviour of man; and as they belong not so much to his ministering as to his glorified state, they may with more propriety be ranked amongst his honours and rewards; and are generally represented under this notion in Scripture. Thus says St. Paul, “Christ humbled himself and became obedient to death,
 “even the death of the cross, wherefore God
 “also hath highly exalted him, and given him
 “a name which is above every name, that at the
 “name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of
 “those in heaven, and those in earth, and those
 “under the earth, and that every tongue should
 “confess [as the original properly expresses it]
 “that Christ Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God
 “the Father,” *Phil. ii. 8—11.* And says Christ himself, “To him that overcometh will I grant
 “to sit with me on my throne, even as I also
 “overcame, and am set down with my Father
 “on his throne,” *Rev. iii. 21.* This dominion of Christ is absolutely universal, extending to the whole universe, and to all God’s rational subjects.

jects that do therein exist. "All power, says
 "Christ, is given unto me in heaven and in
 "earth," *Matt.* xxviii. 18. Peter affirms him to
 "be Lord of all," *Acts* x. 36. 18. And says Paul,
 "God hath set him at his own right hand in the
 "heavenly places, far above all principality and
 "power, and might, and dominion; and every
 "name that is named, not only in this world,
 "but also in that which is to come; and hath
 "put all things under his feet, and gave him
 "to be head over all things, to the church
 "which is his body, the fulness of him that
 " filleth all in all," *Eph.* i. 20—23. To this
 unlimited dominion, we have already shewed,
 he hath every conceivable right. As God, he
 hath a natural inherent right of dominion over
 all, for the whole universe was created by him.
 As God-man, the Son of God, he hath a right of
 inheritance. For says God, "I will make him my
 "first born higher than the kings of the earth,"
Psal. lxxxix. 27. As Saviour of the church, he
 has a right also of purchase. "For he gave
 "himself for them, that he might redeem them
 "from all iniquity, and purchase them to himself
 "a peculiar people." *Tit.* ii. 14. In consequence of
 which, he has a right by the grant or disposition
 of his Father. Thus says he, I appoint or dispose
 a kingdom unto you, as my Father hath ap-
 pointed unto me. This government however
 which he exercises is not merely for his own honour
 and glory; for his glory is his people's good,
 and his honour is the happiness of his subjects.
 To rescue enthralled mortals from the usurpation
 and tyranny of sin and satan; to fill up the in-
 finite blank between pure Deity and his
 highest subjects; to make nearer approaches to
 his creatures, and govern them in a way more
 adapted

adapted to their nature, and conducive to their improvement and happiness; to unite God and his creation in closer union, and manage all things as the eternal-Medium and mediator between them for the honour of God, and the good of his creatures, were the great ends of his being born into the world; and to these his whole gracious and God-like administration is continually directed. In the first state of his existence as God-man, he acted rather as the Saviour; in the second he acts as the Lord of the world. Yet both these characters he has ever united; as both of them are subservient to the same gracious ends. His brethren of mankind needed his first attention, and the first acts of his royal administration consisted in subverting the kingdom of Satan, and in erecting his own kingdom of truth, righteousness, and salvation among men. Having redeemed his guilty brethren with his blood, and laid the foundations of his spiritual kingdom upon earth, he ascends to the high capital of his immense empire, there to be invested in his dominion, with all requisite solemnities, and to enter upon the full administration of that universal empire over which, to his Father's honour and the happiness of his brethren, he was ever to reign. Arrived at the palace of the Eternal, he is received by his Father with every expression of affection and joy of a Father to a son, returned in triumph from the conquest of all his enemies, and the salvation of his subjects, to be made co-partner with him for ever, in the throne of his kingdom. In presence of all heaven, he is by God proclaimed his son and heir. He is invested with robes of glory and royalty similar to his Father's. A crown of glory

is set upon his head. The sceptre of government is put into his hand. He is received and set down with his Father on his throne, declared king and lord of the creation; and the whole inhabitants of his kingdom commanded to reverence and obey him, with which his loyal subjects most chearfully comply. There like the sun in our firmament, he reigns in glory, that illuminates all heaven, and spreads joy and happiness through all its inhabitants. Seated on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers are made subject unto him, 1 *Pet.* iii. 22. They are the peers, he is the prince of the great realm. They are God-like beings, he is God in reality. They are principalities and powers, thrones, and dominions, appointed under him; he is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. They are but creatures, however exalted, he, as to the main constituent of his person, is God over all, and blessed for ever. They are but servants, he is the Son, the Son of God, and himself God. They surround the throne, but he hath the possession of it. "For he maketh his angels
 "spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire; but
 "unto the Son he sayeth, Thy throne, O God,
 "is for ever and ever. A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom; therefore God thy God hath anointed thee with the
 "oil of gladness above thy fellows," *Heb.* i. 8. He presides over the whole celestial hierarchy, and directs all their operations and employments, and they stand ready with joy to execute his orders. He commissions them as ministring spirits to carry his commands to every part and province of his wide extended empire, and in particular

particular, to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. *Heb. i. 14.* He presides over the spirits of the just made perfect, receives his ascending followers into his heavenly kingdom, incorporates them with his celestial subjects, and governs the whole general assembly and church of the first-born.

But as he is Lord and Governor of heaven, so also of earth. The imperial region of his moral empire as God, is the imperial seat too of his mediatorial empire as God-man, yet both the one and the other extends to every province of his great creation. The heavens have received his sacred humanity, and retain him till the restitution of all things; but his divinity fills the universe, and his jurisdiction extends to every creature that as God he hath made. Even the devil and his angels, though from invincible malignity and pride they will not acknowledge him their sovereign, and become his loyal subjects, know well his supremacy, and are subject to his controul: they are the prisoners of his justice, entirely at his disposal, and made the ministers of his vengeance against the other rebels to his government. For he has the keys of hell, and of death as well as of heaven, the whole invisible world being under his dominion. *Rev. i. 18.*

But this our human world is a province of his empire, and the church formed in it, the special subjects of his kingdom. Having assumed our nature, for the honour of God and the happiness of his creation, God hath exalted him to be Prince and Saviour to this fallen world, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins. Thus, says he, "I have set my king upon my holy hill
" of Zion, constituting him head of his church.

" Ask

“ Ask of me,” says he, “ and I will give thee
 “ the heathen for thine inheritance, and the ut-
 “ termost parts of the earth for a possession,”
Psalms ii. 6, 8. “ I saw in the night-visions,” says
 Daniel, “ and behold one like the Son of Man
 “ came with the clouds of heaven, and came
 “ to the ancient of days, and they brought him
 “ near before him, and there was given him
 “ dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all
 “ people, nations and languages, should serve
 “ him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion,
 “ which shall not pass away; and his kingdom,
 “ that which shall not be destroyed,” *Daniel* vii.

13—14. In like manner, the angel, who an-
 nounced his birth and character, as Son of God,
 announced also his dominion: “ The Lord God
 “ shall give unto him the throne of his father
 “ David, and he shall reign over the house of
 “ Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall
 “ be no end,” *Luke* i. 32, 33. The human creation,
 in general, are the subjects of his moral; and
 his church, who submit to the terms of his grace,
 are under his gracious administration. From the
 beginning of the world, he hath presided over
 these as his peculiar people, under the patriar-
 chal and Jewish dispensations, and done every
 thing for their salvation his divine character would
 admit. But having assumed human nature, and
 purchased his church by his blood, he was con-
 nected more closely with, and raised to be head
 of the redeemed world. The divine Spirit and
 all the fulness of grace was lodged in him, for
 animating and forming, and all power given
 him, for guarding and governing this sacred body.
 By the influence of his word and spirit, he
 rescues men from the dominion of sin and Satan,
 through

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through faith and repentance, and translates them into his kingdom of grace and holiness. By his providence, he guards and defends them against all their enemies; and by his spirit, he improves them in every grace, till he makes them meet for heaven, and then he translates them to this higher and more glorious province of his empire. His is the power of issuing out the offers of his grace to a rebellious world, and of appointing officers to promulgate these glad tidings. His is the divine power of sending forth his Spirit of light and life, to accompany his Gospel, and give it effectual evidence on men's minds, and energy on their hearts, for their conversion and salvation. His is the prerogative to appoint ordinances and laws for the benefit, improvement, and government of his people, and his the power to confer upon his faithful subjects, every blessing of his salvation in grace on earth, and glory in heaven.

Thus qualified to be the lord and head of his church, he is no sooner raised to the throne of his kingdom, than he sends forth the gospel of his grace preached by his apostles, and accompanied by the influences of his spirit, into all the world, and the people are made his willing subjects in the day of his power, *Psal. x. 2—3*. Many of the Jews renounced their prejudices and bigotry, and many more of the Gentiles their idolatry and vices. Messiah's spiritual kingdom subduing all the temporal ones which were before it, soon became greater than them all. This kingdom he has preserved since its first erection, and shall continue to preserve to the end of the world. When the destined number of his subjects is brought into being, and that relation and likeness to him, which fits them for advancement into his heavenly kingdom

kingdom is effected, then shall the Lord Christ descend as supreme judge, to hold his grand and general judgment of the world. His whole human subjects shall be assembled at his bar. Their characters and conduct shall be canvassed, and their eternal fate be solemnly decided. Those who would not submit to his sceptre of grace shall be dashed in pieces by his power, as by a rod of iron. The wicked irreclaimable beings, angelic or human, who had rebelled and persisted in their rebellion to his government or grace, shall by his supreme decision, and the omnipotence of his power, be excluded the blissful empire of his happy subjects, and be consigned to the prison of destruction, to suffer the proper punishments their crimes deserve; while all his un-sinners or returning subjects shall be advanced to the imperial regions of heaven where is the throne eternal of God and his Son, to compose one great empire of glorious and happy subjects, who shall honour and obey their creator and their Lord, and possess every blessing of his goodness for ever.

Yet here Messiah's sovereign dominion does not end; but is only brought to that degree of perfection it never had acquired before, and in which it is to continue to endless ages. "Then cometh the end when he shall have delivered up the kingdom, or subjects of the kingdom, to God even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power," that opposed his kingdom. "For he must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet.—But when he sayeth all things are put under him it is manifest that he is excepted who did put all things under him." And
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when all things are by him subdued unto his Father; his enemies to the power of his justice, and his loyal subjects to a confirmed obedience to his righteous government; then shall the Son himself, as filial duty and the example of all dutiful obedience to Deity require, be voluntarily subject to God as his Father, and who hath put his whole creation under him for ever; that God may be all in all, *1 Cor. xv. 24—28.* having all that honour and glory reflected by his Son, which he hath conferred upon him; or placed at the head of the intelligent creation, may with and by his Son, as the grand representative of his Deity, and the connecting bond between him and his creation, preside over the whole empire of virtuous beings established under his dominion for ever. Thus the government of Jehovah shall ever include the royal administration of his Son Jesus. Pharaoh gave Joseph government over all Egypt: “only, says he, in the throne will I be greater”, *Gen. xli. 40.* But Christ the Son possesseth also the throne of heaven with his Father, and exercises every act of administration their perfected empire shall then require: “For his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed,” *Dan. vii. 14.*

IV. This Son of God is the object of all religious worship to the rational creation. The intelligent subjects of God, that we are now acquainted with, are angels and men; and the Son is, by every right, entitled to all worship from both. As God, he is possessed of all divine perfection that can entitle him to every act of religious adoration. As man his super-eminent perfection, glory and dignity, entitle him to correspondent

respondent esteem, admiration and love : As God-man, his complex person is entitled to all religious veneration ; his Deity in its own right, and his humanity in conjunction with that divinity with which it coexists in the same person. As God, the Word, he is the almighty Creator, constant preserver, and sovereign Lord of the whole creation ; and therefore entitled to the highest religious adoration, from all his rational creatures and subjects. As God-man, the Son, he hath done much for the improvement, confirmation and happiness of angels ; and still more for the redemption and salvation of men, and therefore is, in all justice, entitled to the most dutiful regards from both. This honour, so justly due to him in every character, and upon every principle, his Father hath ordained to be paid to him by the whole creation. Thus, when he bringeth his first begotten into the world, first at his incarnation and birth upon earth ; and more conspicuously at his resurrection and ascension into heaven, he sayeth, “ Let all
 “ the angels of God worship him,” *Heb. i. 8.*
 With regard to mankind, he hath assured us,
 “ That he hath committed all judgment to the
 “ Son, that all men might honour the Son, even
 “ as they honour the Father,” *John v. 22, 23.*
 Accordingly we are enjoined ; as the the first and fundamental act of all religion, “ to believe in
 “ him, as well as in the Father,” *John xiv. 1.*
 In his name, and that not as the Word only, but as the Son of God, are Christians and their children solemnly baptized, *Matt. xxviii. 19.* and so obliged to pay him all Christian worship and obedience. And in general, the apostle assures us,
 “ that God hath highly exalted him, and given
 “ him a name, which is above every name, that
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“ at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of
 “ things in heaven, things in earth, and things
 “ under the earth, and that every tongue should
 “ confess, that Christ Jesus is Lord, to the
 “ glory of God the Father.” *Phil. ii. 9—11.*

Convinced of his just title to them, all his loyal subjects in earth or in heaven, ever have given, and ever shall give him the same religious regards, worship and obedience they give to his Father. His church on earth have ever held him the sacred object of their religious devotion, and to him their best and highest worship, however imperfect and inadequate has continually been directed. In him they believe as the great God and their Saviour. In him they place their firmest confidence, and their highest hopes. Him they revere with sacred reverence, and love with warmest affection. To him as the hearer of prayers, as well as through him to the Father, are their prayers directed for every needful blessing; and to him as well as to the Father, are their praise and thanksgiving for these blessings returned. But much more is he honoured with the supreme devotion, adoration, and obedience of his subjects in heaven. The whole blessed empire of angels and glorified men, ever consider him as the author of their existence, the dignifier of their nature, the improver and confirmer of their goodness and happiness, and the grand security of that existence, perfection, and happiness for ever; and pay him every devout and grateful regard these characters do claim. Considering him as the Most High God, their Creator and preserver, they reckon it their eternal duty to venerate his greatness, and to promote his glory. Viewing him as God-man, their elder brother, and the head of the creation, they

they account all his glory and honour as their own. As he is the bright example of all perfection, they esteem it their highest excellence to resemble him; and as the head of government their highest safety to be under his administration. As source at once and medium of every blessing they derive from God, they love him with every ardour of devout and grateful affection; and for all his glory and for all his goodness, they celebrate his praises for ever and ever. The great aim of the Son of God has ever been the good of his creatures, and the great aim of his dutiful creation will ever be to promote his glory.

Such then are the exalted honours and rewards bestowed on the Son of God and Saviour of the world, and which he shall possess through endless ages. He is the sovereign object of his Father's love, the heir of all things, the lord of the world, and the object of religious affection and worship to the whole intelligent and righteous creation. And how well merited are all these honours! Every honour conferred on him is adapted to the character he assumed; every reward to the services by which it was procured; and all are merited in the highest degree. None ever loved God, as did his most affectionate Son; and so none ever merited so much of his love. Love to his Father was the reigning affection of his heart, and the advancement of his glory the great aim and ambition of his life; and love to the Son is the reigning affection of the Father, and the whole constitution of his government is to advance his glory. Low did he humble himself for his Father's honour, and the happiness of his creatures; infinitely lower than any being that ever existed, and therefore in justice,

he is exalted infinitely above the whole creation, and rewarded with the highest honours God can bestow, and his Son possess. If he who was eternally in the form of God, condescended in time to assume the fashion of a man, what more reasonable, than that as God-man, he should be exalted to all the glory of God? Did he come down from heaven to unite with our nature, he is now received for ever into the immediate presence, and into the bosom of his Father. Did he at the will of his Father submit to the fearful sensation of his displeasure at sin for the salvation of mankind; he is now admitted to the fullest sensations of his favour for ever. The proprietor of all things divested himself of them for a time, and is now justly made heir and possessor of all things to eternity. Did he, the Sovereign Lord of the universe which he created, take upon him the form of a servant, and has he done the most essential services for the honour of God, and the happiness of his creation; what more reasonable, than that, by appointment of his Father and consent of his creatures, he should be exalted head and Lord of all? To him, as God or as God-man, creation owes its all; to him therefore in every character, ought creation to be subject, and to do all to his glory. All existence unites in him, all existence derives advantage from him, God the highest glory, creation its greatest good, and therefore the Creator and creation justly conspire in their different provinces to advance his honour. Love to his Father and benevolence to his brethren, nay to the whole kindred creation, ever were, ever are, and ever will be the distinguishing character of the Son of God and Man, and his everlasting business as
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the grand connection and mids-man between them will be to advance the honour of Jehovah on the one part, and the highest happiness of his virtuous empire on the other; and therefore love to him from both, and every expression of their love shall be his just and eternal recompence. He shall enjoy for ever the highest blessedness his Father can bestow, and all the honours his highly favoured and grateful subjects can perform. Angels and men both created by his power, and the one confirmed and the other restored by his mediation, and both united under his blissful government, shall ever consider him as the source of their immortal all, and their hearts be devoted to his love, and their lives to his service and glory for ever. "I beheld, and heard, says St. John, "the voice of many angels round about the "throne, and the beasts and the elders; and the "number of them was ten thousand times ten "thousand, and thousand of thousands; saying "with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that "was slain, to receive power and riches, and "wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, "and blessing. And every creature, which is "in heaven, and on the earth, and under the "earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that "are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing and ho- "nour, and glory, and power, be unto him "that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the "Lamb for ever and ever." *Rev. v. 11—13.*

C H A P. VIII.

Of the Duties we owe to the Son of God, our Saviour and Lord.

WE have in the preceding Chapters investigated the natures, ascertained the Sonship, and given some account of the generation of the Son of God. We have, agreeably to these principles, delineated the dignity of his person, and represented the great offices for which he was born into the world, with his effectual execution of them, and the high honours and rewards to which for his personal dignity and his offices he is justly exalted. These are the capital points of this most important article of the Christian faith, and are of the highest moment for our instruction and happiness. Our delineation of these articles has been general, as we intended to keep as close as possible to the scriptural representations of it, and that the rays of this great truth, which are diffused through the whole sphere of divine revelation, might be arranged, collected and centred into one view, which contributes more to our knowledge and belief of it, than an explication more minute and tedious. Let us now conclude the whole, by pointing out and enforcing the duties, which as men and Christians, we owe to this Son of God our Saviour and Lord. Every doctrine of Christianity has a practical design, and ought to be improved to the purposes of religion and salvation; but none more than this fundamental and most important

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one. The Sonship and offices of Christ comprehend the great foundations of the Christian faith and hopes, and therefore suggest the great and capital duties of the Christian character. They contain all that Christ has become, all that he has done, is doing, or will do for our complete salvation, and naturally lead us to consider all that we must be and do, for the honour of our divine Master, and to secure our interest in that salvation he purchased and reveals to us.

I. Let us seriously consider this gracious constitution of heaven in the generation and offices of the Son of God for our salvation, and be convinced of its truth and necessity, its fitness and sufficiency, for the great ends designed by it.

Inconsideration is the source of that ignorance, ignorance of that disbelief, and disbelief of that disregard to Christ and Christianity that have so generally prevailed in the world. Did men consider the Christian scheme with that attention its infinite importance deserves, they could not fail to understand it. In proportion as they understand it, they must be convinced of its truth, necessity and importance; and in proportion as they are convinced of these, will they admire and regard it. The whole history of the human world from the beginning, the public face of mankind, and the private feelings of every conscientious individual in every age, join with the declarations of heaven in assuring us, that we are sinful and guilty creatures, and that a divine Saviour was necessary to redeem and save us. The whole revelations of God to mankind from age to age, have informed us, that of the divine goodness a Saviour was provided for us, and that this Saviour was to be the Son of God. And the

fulfillment of all the prophecies given of the Son of God and Saviour of the world, in Christ Jesus, and the glorious characters himself possessed, give every discerning mind the fullest and most incontestable evidence, that he is that illustrious person.

But besides these external proofs of its necessity and truth, Christianity carries much internal evidence of its divinity, and necessity, which, to all who attend to it, is no less demonstrative. Signatures of their divine author are stamp'd deep upon all the works and ways of God; and the more these works and ways are considered, the more clearly do the divine mind that designed, and the hand that executed them, appear. The salvation of the human, and confirmation of the moral world, by the personal constitution and mediating offices of God's only begotten Son, like the glorious person who achieved them, are the chief of the ways of God. What but divine wisdom could have concerted such a scheme as the personal union of the Creator with his creatures? A scheme so supernatural, that no mind less than divine could ever have thought of it, and no power below omnipotence could have accomplished it: yet a scheme, which, by the most admirable accommodation of the means to its ends, displays the divine wisdom in the noblest point of view, and which being calculated to display the divine perfection, and exalt, improve, and confirm his rational creation, tends, beyond any thing we can conceive, to answer the ends of the creation, and so holds forth the great Creator to be its author and accomplisher. The whole scheme itself demonstrates not only its divinity, but its necessity also for the ends designed

signed by it. If the union of God with our nature, and his atonement for our sin, had not been necessary to procure our redemption from eternal misery, the Divine Word had never been made flesh, and the Son of God had never died to procure this redemption: or, did not the wisdom of heaven see it proper by him to reconcile and unite under one glorious head, the various tribes of God's rational empire, Christ, as God-man, had never been constituted the head and Lord of the creation. For Omniscience can never err, nor can infinite wisdom do any thing in vain. We weak, and often prejudiced mortals, who know very little of the measures and ends of the Divine Government, are ready to judge of what we do not know, and condemn what we have not considered. But, whatever God does, we may be sure is done wisely, and well; and the more we know of his great designs, the more shall we be convinced that every part of them is necessary; and that the whole is concerted in the most perfect wisdom.

But as this divine constitution demonstrates its own necessity, so it no less discovers its fitness and sufficiency for the purposes to be accomplished by it. What can more dignify the created Sons of God, than to have their natures united with that of God in the person of his Son? What can be a proper and effectual atonement for our sins, and ransom of our souls, if the blood of the Son of God is not? an atonement proper, being the blood of man; an atonement infinite, being the blood of a person who was also God. What can so mortify the pride of devils, as that men whom they had enslaved and debased by sin, should be ennobled above angels, by the assumption of their

nature into the union with the Divinity, and that redeemed by Messiah's merits, we should be exalted to supply their places in the palace of heaven; while these malignant beings, shall be consigned for ever to the prison of hell? What can more confirm the authority of the divine laws, than the obedience given to them by the supreme Lawgiver himself, in human nature? Or what can more establish God's creation, in loyalty to their sovereign, and friendship with each other, than the close alliance that is formed among the whole by the wonderful person, and confirmed by the offices of his Son our Saviour? Thus Christianity carries its evidence of its divinity, necessity and excellence in itself. These are the sources of that faith, by which the bulk of Christians believe and embrace the Gospel. By the Word of God, in which this scheme is unfolded, and by the Spirit of God, by whom they are enabled rightly to apprehend it, they perceive its divinity and excellence: from a sense of their perishing condition, they are convinced of its necessity and importance; and from its admirable fitness and sufficiency for their complete salvation, they are brought to approve of it, and to fall in cordially with its gracious design. This therefore ought to be the first and the serious concern of every human being: for this is the great duty of Christianity, and from this every duty we owe to the Son of God our Saviour must naturally originate. We must study this glorious scheme before we can know it; and be convinced of its truth and importance before we can believe and comply with it, for our salvation and happiness. How careful then ought we to be to know God and Jesus Christ? This of all subjects of study is the

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the noblest in itself, as it has the most excellent of all beings for its object. And it is infinitely the most interesting to us, as being the foundation of our whole Christian duty in a compliance with the gospel, and of our supreme and eternal happiness, in all the blessings therein contained. This is what angels and superior beings desire to look into, and what the redeemed or confirmed creation shall consider as the great source of their dignity, and the best security of their everlasting happiness, and so contemplate it with highest pleasure and joy through eternal ages. This therefore ought to be the first and chief study of every individual of mankind, "for this is life eternal, to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent," *John xvii. 3.*

II. Let us be supremely thankful to God and to his Son Jesus, for this unexampled establishment of his grace for the redemption and salvation of our perishing world.

Every blessing we derive from God, claims our warmest gratitude and our highest praise; and our obligation to these duties rises in proportion to the greatness and importance of the benefits received. Of all the blessings God could bestow, or our guilty perishing world could receive, the appointment of his Son as our Saviour was the greatest and the best. In creation he brought us from non-existence into our present being. By redemption he brings us from a state worse than non-existence, even a state of sin and misery, into a state of grace here and of glory hereafter. By the generous bounty of his providence, he provides for the happiness of this temporary life, that must soon have an end. By the riches of his grace, he provides for the happiness

pineness of our immortal souls, and our immortalized bodies in that life and world that shall endure for ever. The first of these benefits cost him but a word; the second costs him the common care of his general providence; but our redemption cost God the life of his Son, and the Son of God his life and blood. To procure the redemption of our guilty, and the salvation of our perishing world, God must become God-man. The eternal Word must be born the Son of God in the fulness of time; that he might raise the children of men to become the Sons of God and heirs of heaven to eternity. The sovereign of the universe must be made under the law and become obedient unto death, that we his rebellious subjects might be redeemed from the curse of the law, even death eternal; and be restored to life and happiness everlasting. What infinite and eternal gratitude then does our human world owe to the three-one God for this unexampled expression of his grace and love! What gratitude do we owe to the divine Father, who so loved our world, as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life. He hath sent his coessential Word, by whom he had created us and all things, to assume our nature, and become our Redeemer. He hath made him who had been God from eternity, by uniting personally with human nature in a most wonderful generation, to become the Son of God and man, that he might be Mediator betwixt them, and reconcile and unite them in eternal friendship. He hath not spared this his Son, his only Son, but hath delivered him to the death for us all, that through
his

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his atonement he might freely also give us all things. He hath exalted him to his own right hand, and invested him with universal power in heaven and on earth, that he might effectually bestow upon us these blessings of his purchase. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath begotten us again to a lively hope, to the hope of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. What gratitude also do we owe to the Blessed Spirit of God, who formed the human body of our divine Redeemer, by his Almighty power, who adorned his soul with every godlike perfection of goodness and holiness, who assisted him in the discharge of his offices for the purchase of our salvation, enables us to comply with its offer, and seals to us every blessing this salvation contains.

Especially what gratitude and praise do we owe to the Son of God, the glorious Emmanuel, for all that he is become, for all that he has done and suffered, and for all that he has procured for the redemption and happiness of his brethren of mankind! Blessed Saviour of the human race, when thou tookest not hold of fallen angels, thou tookest hold of perishing men to save them, and became our kinsman, that thou mightest be our Redeemer. Thou who wast God, and wast in the essence and bosom of God, from eternity humbledst thyself, by assuming our humanity into union with thy divinity, to dignify us; and that thou mightest be mediator between God and man, thou becamest the Son of both. Thou suppressedst thy glory for a while to express thy goodness, camest down from thy throne to thy footstool,

footstool, of the form of God tookest the fashion of a man, and humbledst thyself to become obedient unto death, that thou mightest redeem us from death and hell, and exalt us to heaven and eternal glory. Blessed Jesus, our God and our Saviour, how great has been thy goodness to the children of men! Thou broughtest us from nothing into being, by thy creating power: thou endowedst us with reason, madest us capable of religion, and formedst us for immortality, of thy distinguishing goodness: and when by sin we had destroyed ourselves, thou didst purchase our redemption by thy blood from every evil, and our recovery to every happiness, and thou reignest for ever on the throne of heaven, dignifying our nature, and giving us every assurance of that eternal salvation thou hast graciously procured for us. Great Redeemer, the whole creation owes thee much, owes thee their all, but none owes thee so much as we. Let every human heart glow with the warmest gratitude and love to thee for such unequalled love and compassion to us, and let every mouth be filled with thy praise: "Salvation to him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb. Blessed be he that came in the name of the Lord to save us, Hosanna to the Son of David," to the Son too of a greater than David, Hosanna in the highest to the Son of God. "Unto Jesus Christ, who is the faithful and true witness, the first begotten from the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and the Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." Amen. *Rev. i. 5, 6.*

III. As

III. As the proper consequence of our belief of this gracious constitution of heaven, and the proper expression of our gratitude for it; we ought to accept of this Son of God as our Saviour, and comply with this glorious establishment for our complete salvation.

This is the great and fundamental duty required of mankind in the gospel, and the capital regard every man ought to perform to the Son of God, our Saviour and Lord. The fundamental law of the Christian scheme alike, wise and just, is, that as the Son of God, by assuming creation into union with its Creator, hath done creation the highest honour; and by his offices hath highly advanced their happiness, so all creatures, who would have the benefit of this gracious constitution, must pay every proper regard to God's Son our Saviour, be conformed to his character, and comply with the methods of his government for their perfection and happiness. This observation holds as to every other province of the great empire of God, and of his Son Messiah, so particularly as to our human world with which he is especially connected. His person and all his offices were ordained for our happiness, and with the intention of these must we dutifully comply, if we would obtain the honours and felicities thereby designed to us. As the Son of God is the purchaser, so he is the natural and appointed dispenser of the blessings of his purchase; but as Christ and the benefits of his purchase go together, we must receive him as our Saviour, if we would have an interest in his salvation. As he is the bond of union, so he is the medium of communicating every blessing from
God

God to man: but we must be united to him, if we would partake in these blessings. He is the head of life and influence to the church which is his body, and through him the divine spirit, righteousness and life are conveyed to his members; but we must be members of that life-giving head before we can partake of his influence and of life. He is the governor of the world and the Saviour of his people, but we must comply with the laws of his government, and become his real well-affected subjects and people before we can obtain the privileges of his kingdom. He is the Mediator of the better covenant, the blessings of which were all purchased with his blood; but those only who comply with his covenant, can enjoy the inestimable blessings it contains. He of God became also the Son of God by generation and assumption of our nature and likeness, and the elder brother and head of the heaven-born family; we of men must by regeneration after the divine image become the Sons of God, and the brethren of the Son of God, that we may be the members of his family and coheirs of his inheritance. He in short is Christ Jesus, anointed by the divine Spirit to be the Saviour and Lord of the church. We must be true Christians, anointed with the same Spirit, and formed after the same temper and character with Christ our master, by a thorough compliance with his religion and salvation, if we would have a saving interest in the merits of Christ, and obtain the blessings of Christians, which Christ hath purchased.

Salvation is promised sometimes to faith, sometimes to repentance, sometimes to holiness, and sometimes to obedience to God and to Christ.

But

But the great and general character, of which all these are but the constituent parts, and to which character salvation is annexed, is, that we be real Christians, the friends of Christ by compliance with his gospel, the brethren of Christ by conformity to his image in wisdom and goodness, piety and holiness; and the loyal subjects of his kingdom by a sincere and dutiful obedience to all his commands. A spiritual or moral conformity to the Son of God by his Word and Spirit, in those who are capable of it, and by his Spirit alone in those who are incapable or destitute of the influence of his Word, is the first part of our salvation, and the natural and just foundation of all its other benefits. This applies to persons of every age, and under every dispensation; and ought therefore to be the great concern of all whom the gospel is revealed to, and who would have that blessed relation to the Son of God, which alone can give us an interest in the blessings of his salvation. For "unless a man be
 " born again, says our Saviour, born from above,
 " born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot
 " enter into the kingdom of God," *John* iii. 3, 5. And says St. Paul, "In Christ Jesus neither
 " circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncir-
 " cumcision, but a new creature," which he assures us, every man must be, who is truly in Christ, *Gal.* vi. 15. *2 Cor.* v. 17. The only begotten Son, who is heir to the heavenly inheritance, is the pattern or archetype, according to which all the created and renewed children of the family of God must be formed; and by conformity to him, they become children with him of the same family, and coheirs with him of the heavenly inheritance. He assumed our nature in
 generation

generation that he might become our kinsman, and redeem the inheritance. But we also must be made partakers of his divine nature in regeneration that the alliance may be compleated; and we may have a meetness through that image, and title through his merits to the kingdom he hath purchased. To begin the saving alliance he came down, and partook our flesh to contract union with the sons of men, that he might raise them to be sons also of God; but to complete the happy connection, we must be made partakers of his spirit, and through his spirit, partakers of temper and image begun in grace, that we may partake every blessing of his grace on earth, and completed in glory, that we may enjoy the blessings of glory in heaven.

This blessed change, the foundation of real Christianity, and the source of our interest in all its benefits, is the effect of our compliance with his Gospel in heart and life through the influence of his Blessed Spirit. By this we are at once transformed into the image, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, and as children of God, and brethren of the Son of God, we become heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. This is the established constitution of heaven, equally calculated to do honour to the Son of God, the author of our salvation, and to promote the happiness of his people for whom that salvation was purchased, Compliance with. This is the chief duty we owe, and must through his grace perform, to the Redeemer of our world, if we would wish and hope to have the benefit of his redemption. And this as the whole Christian constitution indicates, so every part of its revelation expressly declares. Thus when God predicted

predicted his Son's generation and birth into the world, and his instalment in his great offices for our salvation; he says, "Kiss the Son lest he be angry and ye perish from the way, blessed are all they that trust in him," *Psal. ii. 12.* And when he had exhibited him to the world, and announced his character, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," he immediately adds what is our capital duty in regard to him, "Hear ye him," *Matt. xvii. 5.* Thus Christ when he sent forth his ambassadors the apostles to publish his salvation, and the gracious terms on which men were to receive the benefits of it, expressly declares, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, he that believeth not, shall be damned," *Mark xvi. 16.* And his apostle therefore having assured us, that "this is the record of God, that God hath given to us eternal life, and that this life is in his Son," instantly subjoins an account of the just and established way in which we shall obtain it. "He that hath the Son hath life. He that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

1 *John v. 11, 12.*

How careful then ought every man to be, to whom this scheme of salvation is revealed? seriously to consider its infinite importance, and firmly to believe, and cordially to comply with it. Our eternal happiness depends on the salvation of Christ; our interest in that salvation depends on our being true Christians, and our being true Christians depends upon our sincere approbation of, and hearty acquiescence in the Christian scheme. This to every human being, is his highest interest, and ought to be his great concern. Convinced of our sin and guilt,

guilt, and that without a Saviour we must perish for ever; convinced that there is no other name by which we can be saved, but the name of Christ; convinced that we must receive him as our Saviour, and fall in with the gracious terms of his Gospel, if we would obtain his salvation; and convinced of the unspeakable happiness we shall thereupon enjoy, we ought with immediate, and most cordial affection, by his promised Spirit, to comply with this establishment of God for the salvation of mankind in its full extent. We ought to renounce all our sins by immediate and unfeigned repentance, resolved to return to God and to our duty, through his Son the Mediator. We ought to accept of Christ as our Saviour, with our whole heart and in his whole character; desirous to be restored by his spirit from sin to holiness, and by his merits from guilt and condemnation, to justification and life; ambitious of nothing so much as to be the children of God, and brethren of the Son of God, to be taken under the guidance of his spirit, and conducted safe to his heavenly kingdom; and resolved by his grace to adhere to our illustrious master in every Christian affection, to form upon his character, and observe his laws. We ought never to be satisfied with our knowledge of Christianity, however enlarged, till we also believe it. No faith in the Gospel ought to satisfy us, for none can save us, but what produces a thorough compliance with it in heart and life. And never ought we to flatter ourselves that we are sincere Christians, who have complied with the Gospel of Christ, and have that relation to him, which will give us an interest in his salvation, till we find in our minds an habitual belief and approbation of this gracious scheme; a supreme love to our

God who contrived, and to the Son of God who executed it, and a real conformity, through his spirit to his amiable character in the prevailing temper of our mind, and tenor of our life. For if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. They only who embrace the religion of Christ, can obtain his salvation. They only who are spiritually united to Christ, by faith, love, and universal holiness have security of their eternal union, and communion with God, and of enjoying every blessing of his love and goodness.

IV. Having complied with his Gospel, and accepted the Son of God as our Saviour, we ought to maintain and cultivate every worthy sentiment and dutiful affection which we owe to him both in his personal and official character.

Jesus, we have shewed, possesses every nature divine and created, and every character of greatness and goodness, and stands to us in all those relations of our Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer, that lay a foundation for every pious and Christian affection of which our minds are capable. Let our minds therefore ever entertain those just and exalted sentiments of his person and offices, and our hearts all those devout affections to him he so justly deserves. Let us not, with Arians and Socinians, hold the Son of God, our Saviour, to be but a more exalted creature when we have every evidence the word of God can give us, that he is God the Creator. Nor let us, with Semi-Arians and others, hold him to be only a generated Deity, and deprive him of some of the noblest characters of divinity, necessary-existence, self-existence, and absolute eternity, when
all

all Scripture ascribes these perfections to him alike as to the Father, affirms their essence to be one, and their perfection one; and all reason dictates that whatever exists in the one divine immutable essence, and is consubstantial with that essence, must be equally self-existent, necessarily-existent, unoriginated and eternal with that divine essence, or any other personal subsistence into which it is distinguished. In opposition to these errors, which are so contrary to every principle of Scripture and reason, so derogatory to the honour of the Great God, our Saviour, and which have been so detrimental to his religion in every age; let us ever consider him, in his divine character, as the second person of the co-essential, co-equal and co-eternal Trinity. In his complex person, let us view him as the divine Word made flesh, the begotten Son of God, the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, the Creator of all things, as God; and, as God-man, the Head and Lord of the creation, and the kinsman and Redeemer of his brethren of mankind. Let the devout sentiments of our mind and affections of our heart ever bear proportion to these just notions we have of his person and character. Let us venerate his divine perfection, glory, and Majesty, as God over all, and blessed for ever, our almighty Creator, and our sovereign Lord. Let us admire the condescensions of his love to mankind, who assumed our nature into union with his divine person; and, in that complex person, became the Son of God, and the Son of Man, that he might reconcile God and Man, and be the author and pledge of our eternal friendship. Let

Let us highly esteem him as the glorious Immanuel, God, and the Son of God, Man, and the Son of Man, the image of the invisible God, the head and glory of the creation, possessing every excellent nature and every perfection, of which these natures are possessed. Let us love him with our whole soul, who, as God, called us from nothing into being, and who, as God-man, has recovered us from a state worse than nothing, and will raise us to the highest perfection and happiness, of which our natures are capable. Let us ever reverence him as our God, love him as our brother, regard him as our sovereign, and rejoice in him as our Saviour. Let us trust in him as the blessed Mediator, through whom we have access to every blessing of the divine favour, and let us repose all our hopes of pardon of sin, acceptance with God, and life eternal, in his merits and mediation. Let us exult in him, as the everlasting bond of union and medium of communion, between God and his creation, and of the rational creation one part with another, and triumph in the victories he hath atchieved over all our enemies, and in the security he hath given us, in his person and offices, of our immortal existence, perfection and happiness. Christ possesses every excellence that claims universal regard, and has done us every office that can excite our affection, gratitude and love. That mind must be blind indeed, which sees not his excellence, who unites every perfection; that heart must be hard, and destitute of every ingenuous and noble principle, that feels not regard and good affection to the author of our being, our Redeemer from sin and death, and our Restorer to life and happiness.

pinels everlasting. The Son of God is the person whom angels and superior beings esteem, admire and revere, and in whom God himself supremely delights. Let man ever join in the general good affection. Of all beings, we are the most indebted to him, and of all creatures we ought the most to love him. All that we have and hope are derived from him, and to him let our best affections be consecrated. Let our minds be devoted to his knowledge and faith, and our hearts to his reverence and love. Let us ever trust in him as our faithful friend, rejoice in him as our God and Saviour, and long for the enjoyment of him, as our everlasting happiness. This is the noblest exercise of our powers as we are men, and our essential and distinctive character as Christians. By these worthy sentiments and good affections to the Son of God, our Saviour, we perform the principal duties we owe to our Maker and Redeemer, and have the best evidence that we are his genuine friends and subjects, and that we shall obtain every blessing he will bestow upon his people.

V. Let us express these devout affections to the Son of God, our Saviour, by a steadfast profession of his religion, and by a faithful performance of every act of religious worship; so justly due to him, and a sincere obedience to all his commands.

Christianity, where it is genuine, must ever be seated in the heart, but must not be confined there. Our internal good affections to the Son of God, our Saviour, must exert and express themselves in a dutiful profession of Christianity, and in every act of religion and obedience to our divine Master, that is therein enjoined to us.

Infidels

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Infidels and irreligious persons, with equal folly and impiety, disregard the Son of God, their Creator and Redeemer, and others are too ready to follow their wicked example—but nothing can be imagined more absurd and impious. In Christianity, there is not one thing of which we have the least reason to be ashamed; but every thing which we have the highest reason to glory in. Every denomination of mankind have boasted in the author of their religion; the Jews in that their law was delivered by Moses, and by the ministry of angels; and the Mahometans in that the Alcöran was composed by their prophet. But our religion rises higher than these. It has not only God for its author, but the incarnate Word, God's begotten Son, for its visible administrator. This, as it made Christianity the most perfect religion that was, so it conferred upon it also a dignity which no other religion can claim. So sensible of this was Mahomet, that to rob Christianity of its super-eminent glory, he was obliged first to divest its author of his dignity as God, and the Son of God, and to hold him to be only a prophet superior to Moses, but inferior to himself. Let every Christian then glory in what is their peculiar honour, and what no other denomination of men ever could, or can boast. The author of our religion is the Son of God, the divine Word made flesh, and dwelling amongst us, that he might, by his merits, purchase our redemption, and might instruct us in that religion, by which this redemption should be revealed and applied to us. Let Christianity then be our boast, as it is our glory; and when the Son has done us, the children of men, such infinite honour, as to assume our nature that he might

might call us his brethren, and in that nature hath redeemed us from every evil to every happiness; let us do ourselves the honour of being the brethren of the Son of God, and ascribe to our illustrious friend, all the glory which ever belongs to him. As he is God, let us ever hold him, with the Father and Spirit, the supreme object of all religious worship. As God-man, let us ever regard him as the glorious mediator, through whom all our addresses to God should be made, and all God's goodness shall be communicated to us. Let us, as often as we have opportunity, devoutly partake of the Holy Sacrament, in commemoration of his death, and constantly observe and sanctify the Sabbath, in memory of his resurrection. And as our hearts ought daily to glow with every pious affection to this Redeemer of our souls, our mouths ought daily to celebrate his praise. This ever has been the devout employment of his saints on earth, and will be the everlasting exercise of all his saints and his angels in heaven. Let us then be early and well initiated into their sacred exercises in time, in which we wish to be employed through our immortal being. Let us show forth his praise, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light, who hath rescued us from the slavery of sin and Satan, redeemed us from eternal condemnation, and exalted us to the hopes of heaven and eternal happiness. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name be the glory. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, wisdom and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue, and people

people and nation; and hast made us unto our God, kings and priests.

VI. Lastly, Let us by his grace form upon him as our great example, obey him as our Master, and grow up in all things to him who is our head.

The begotten Son of God is the glorious pattern according to which all the created and renewed children are to be formed, and whom they are carefully to imitate, that they may truly resemble him. Uniting Deity and humanity in his person, and exhibiting every divine excellence in human form, he has brought divine perfection to human view, and fitted it more for the imitation of his finite brethren, than it had ever been before. Upon this glorious model the children of God are first formed in their regeneration by the same divine spirit that adorned the human nature of Christ with god-like perfection in his divine generation; and through the continued influence of the same spirit, and the exercises of every christian grace and virtue by which he grew up in his Father's image, must we grow up into the image of God our heavenly Father, by growing up duly in the image of his Son. This ought to be our chief care, as it is our greatest concern. Having been renewed after his image by his blessed spirit in the principles and temper of our mind in our first compliance with his gospel, let us improve in a growing conformity to that image in a constant obedience to it. Let us endeavour to have his spirit more and more imparted to us, as it was gradually imparted to him. Let us, with this spirit of Christ, endeavour more and more to acquire the divine and christian temper, and to live the divine and christian life. Let the love of our God and Saviour reign habitually

tuallly in our heart, and the example and laws he hath given us, be continually in our eye. What Christ forbade, let every Christian abstain from; what Christ enjoined and practised, let every Christian observe and do. Let the same piety to God, the same extensive and active benevolence to mankind, and the same holiness and heavenly mindedness that adorned our Redeemer's character adorn ours. Christianity is a real and growing conformity to Christ, and therefore would we be real Christians, we must in principles, temper, and conduct, be conformed to Christ. Let us therefore put off the old man with his deceitful lusts, and put on the new man which is created in righteousness and true holiness; for if any man be a Christian, he must be a new creature. We must be what our Master was in universal goodness, if we would hope to be what he now is, in eternal glory. We must live as brethren of the Son of God, in temper and conduct, in time, if we would at last possess his salvation through eternity. For those and those only who are conformed to the first born Son and Heir in all wisdom and holiness, religion and righteousness, through his blessed spirit, can be the sons of God and brethren of Christ, and co-heirs with the Son of God in his great inheritance.

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